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THE HARVEYS.

VOL. I.

THE HARVEYS.

BY

HENRY KINGSLEY,

AUTHOR OF "HETTY," "OLD MARGARET," "GEOFFREY HAMLYN,"
"RAVENSHOE" ETC. ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

TINSLEY BROS., 18, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

1872.

LONDON:
WYMAN AND SONS, PRINTERS, GREAT QUEEN STREET,
LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS, W.C.

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PREFACE.



THE Author thinks it due to himself to say that this Novel was written seven years ago. Some of the chapters in it being considered too realistic, though perfectly true, the Author cast it on one side for a time. The present tale is very slightly altered in form, and the doubtful chapters are omitted.



CONTENTS OF VOL. I.



| CHAP. | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 1. MY FIRST VIEW OF HAWKINS THE SUCCESSFUL | 1 |
| 2. SOMETHING ABOUT THE HARVEYS ... | 9 |
| 3. MY AUNT EDITH..... | 31 |
| 4. I GO TO SCHOOL | 44 |
| 5. MR. HAWKINS AGAIN | 63 |
| 6. HOME..... | 75 |
| 7. MADAME D'ESTRADA AND ONE OTHER GUEST | 89 |
| 8. HOME AGAIN | 98 |

| CHAP. | PAGE |
|--------------------------------------|------|
| 9. THE LION | 113 |
| 10. SHADOWS OF THE FUTURE | 124 |
| 11. MR. NETHERCLIFT'S DECISION..... | 142 |
| 12. FREEDOM | 157 |
| 13. DORA A LADY | 167 |
| 14. MY AUNT EDITH SURPRISES ME | 200 |
| 15. THE GARDEN-PARTY | 206 |
| 16. HAWKINS MAKES A MAN OF ME..... | 217 |
| 17. AT LADY FROGMARSH'S..... | 231 |



THE HARVEYS.



CHAPTER I.

MY FIRST VIEW OF HAWKINS THE SUCCESSFUL.



HOW well I remember the afternoon of a dark November day, when my father and I sat painting together in the gathering gloom : even now, when it is all over, I cannot think of that afternoon without a quaint mixture of feelings. I was only eleven years old at that time, yet now I have a tendency to be glad and sorry, to laugh and to cry, when I think of the man who came to me for the first time that afternoon.

The door was suddenly opened from the outside, without any announcement whatever, and a loud voice,—a voice I knew so well afterwards,—roared out,—

“What, Harvey! daubing away, eh?—daubing away! Hah; it was that daubing which spoilt your degree; and now you are teaching it to your own son. How are you, my dear old chap?”

My father’s kind, worn face turned towards the new-comer with a smile, and while he was shaking hands with him.

A very tall and handsome man, about thirty-five, even now getting somewhat stout, with very grand black whiskers, and fine teeth, dressed with singularly good taste,—in fact, very fashionably,—but only showing that he was a clergyman by his white tie. What was most singular about the man, however, was a look of wonderful

comical *bonhomie*, which lit up his whole face, from the smooth forehead which dominated a pair of always arched eyebrows, down to the comical and gentle mouth and chin. I took an instinctive liking for the man at once, but, from some reason or another, thought that he would never get on in life, or be any richer than he was at present. How far I was right the reader will find out for himself, or, indeed, the heading of this chapter, which is by no means satirical, will show. I only, however, had to look on him and like him.

“Well, how are the boys?” said my father, cheerily.

“I have given the whole sixty of them fifty lines apiece, and kept them in for the rest of the term,” said Mr. Hawkins, with a radiant smile. “I must be firm.”

“ You must, indeed,” said my father, laughing, “ and you seem to be. What did they do ? ”

“ Well, I did not happen to attend class at all this morning, and the boys were left entirely alone with the monitors ; and they got the biggest monitor, Jack Rawlins, down among them, and poured a pint of ink over him out of my private bottle ; and he was forced to be sent home in a cab ; and, God bless the fine fellows, not a soul of them will sneak on the other, and so I have sent Jack Rawlins to the bottom of the class, which will lose him his remove, and have given the whole class fifty lines, and kept them in till the end of term.”

“ But you should not have left the boys alone for four hours,” said my father,

with his shoulders shaking. "What will the Committee say?"

"Let me catch them saying anything! They knew I had a curacy, and agreed that I was to attend to it. I'll not hear a word out of their heads; let them pay me the £120 which Lord Frogmarsh pays me, and I will give up the curacy."

"I don't think you would, Hawkins," said my father.

"Well, perhaps you are right; I don't know that I would. Lord Frogmarsh has as good as given me a living. I shall hold on by the curacy."

"And let the boys pour the ink over the monitor's head."

"Ha, ha!" said Mr. Hawkins, laughing; "you should have seen Jack Rawlins: they won't get his face clean for a month."

“You are as bad as any of them, Hawkins,” said my father; “or, at least, you were, both at the school and the university.”

“Well, perhaps I was,” he said, apparently delighted.

“You want taming,” said my father. “When you get a living, you will marry, and your wife will tame you. You will marry, I know.”

“No-o-o,” said Mr. Hawkins, *ore rotundo*, with an emphasis which I well remembered a few years later. “By the bye,” he continued, “do you want a pupil?”

“Yes, very badly,” said my father; “I sha’n’t get through the year without debt if I don’t have one.”

“Well, then, I have got you one,—a good boy enough, but utterly ignorant.

He has been a waterman's apprentice at the river-side, and has come into more money than you or I ever had, in consequence of his grandfather, a great builder of houses at Chelsea, having quarrelled with his relations, and left all his money to this lad. His mother asked me what your price was, and I said, in such a case as this, not under £150."

"My dear Hawkins, I would have taken £60."

"Yes, but you weren't asked. Can he come the day after to-morrow? Good-bye."

When he was gone, I asked my father who he was.

"Hawkins, second master of the North-East London Grammar School, an old friend at school and university. He has some trifle of private fortune, and a fellow-

ship, so he does not take pupils, but sometimes sends me one, when he hears of one."

"Is he a very kind man?" I asked.

"I think that he is the very kindest of men; but, for his own ends, he has taken a cure of souls in the country; and consequently his class are left to run riot until one o'clock every Monday. He is a very fine preacher, and, but for his reckless *bonhomie*, might have been a bishop. As it is, he will never be successful in life."



CHAPTER II.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE HARVEYS.



VERY early in life my father had begun to fail, and, in fact, was a ruined man in the opinion of the most experienced Dons long before he took his degree. My father was not ruined by dress, dice, profligacy, or horses, any more than he was ruined by idleness, for he was diligent at lecture, and always got through his examinations to the very day. What ruined my father was his persistent culture of modern literature, and painting. The dear man never *could* paint to a

marketable extent, but he never did any thing else if he could help it. It is difficult to say why he never could paint anything which any one could buy, because he is one of the best art-critics I ever listened to; but such was the fact: it seems a *spécialité* of the greatest art-critics that they cannot paint themselves, and when I read the astounding assertion the other day, made by Mr. Disraeli in "Lothair," that the critics were those who have failed in art and literature, I began to think about my own case and that of Jack Verney. Jack never could get ten pounds for a picture in his life, whereas I——well, I will not in any way, but I would engage, if it was worth my while, to make ten times as much with my *left hand* as he could with his right. Verney is my principal critic in several papers, and his

persistent efforts to write me down are intensely amusing. “We have warned this artist time out of mind that his use of chrome is excessive in his middle distance ;” or, “Will this artist *never* understand that the surface of water, however small, is *round*, and not flat ;” or, where he gets personal, as he sometimes does, “This artist has this year given us another portrait of his brother, Captain Harvey, this time in the character of Leander. We wish that he would get some other model ;” or, “‘My Aunt,’ by Mr. Harvey, is supposed to be a portrait of Lady Edith Harvey playing the piano, with the Comtesse d’Estrada behind her. The piano is very good, but we should not have recognized either of the ladies.” Such was the help I got from my own fellow-student, at the very darkest time of

my life, when I was exhibiting and selling off everything at any price to raise money.

There had been some considerable sum of money in our family at one time. My father's elder brother had that money, twenty thousand pounds, my father said, and had made ducks and drakes of it. He was a Captain of dragoons, and as he was of an affectionate and domestic turn, he thought that it would be selfish to make away with all the money single-handed, and in consequence married very foolishly a certain Lady Edith Devereux, daughter of the Earl of Ballykilglass, who has repeatedly told me that she was to have had £3,000, but never got a sixpence of it. My Aunt Edith was a young lady of the most amazing beauty, and there were wild legends in our family that she was a splendid singer, and had once made Italy

ring from one end to another by appearing in the character of Adelgisa at La Scala, when Malibran was taken suddenly ill. Where Miss Lee got this story from I do not know, and she never could tell me ; I only know that my aunt never sang one note at our house after she came to stay with us.

My uncle fell in love with Lady Edith in her second season, when she was without all doubt the greatest beauty in London. They were married in Scotland, having run away, at the advice of the then Earl of Ballykilglass, it was said, to avoid the expenses of a regular wedding. After which they set to work spending their £20,000, and managed it handsomely in about three years and a half. My uncle then found that his principles required him to go to Spain in aid of that most ill-used

man, Don Carlos, and he went there, with the price of his commission, taking my Aunt Edith with him, who assumed the garb of a Sister of Mercy, and worked among the ambulances, going under fire very often, and receiving on one occasion a very ugly wound from a British bullet on her arm, a wound which I have often seen. Her last act in this character was the searching for the body of her own husband, and getting it buried in a grave by itself. After this my aunt Lady Edith disappeared for a very long time, and what became of her she always refused to tell us. I fancy she lived a great deal in Italy, for she was very fond of talking to organ-grinders in their native tongue, though she never allowed them to play a bar in her hearing.

My father took an ordinary pass degree,

but, being on a foundation, would have proceeded as a matter of course to a fellowship. He, however, decided not to take it, but, to every one's astonishment, married a young lady, a clergyman's daughter, who had been a governess, as poor as himself, and went as her father's curate. It is not quite certain what they lived on for a long time, unless they lived on my grandfather, which I suppose must have been the case, for there was nothing else on which they could have lived; but after my brother Dick, myself, and my sister Dora had been born, a stroke of fortune came to him. By the influence of an old fellow-student, he was appointed to the perpetual curacy of St. Bridget's, Camden Town, with a salary of £380 a year. He moved to that locality, and took a house in Bridget's Square: in

three years more my father found himself left, with five children, a widower.

I remember the night of my mother's death well, though I can scarcely remember her. My father said often to me that she was very beautiful, and that I was like her. Now one of the things which has vexed me very much all my life is that I am anything but handsome, and so my father must be wrong one way or another ; but the result was the same, I was her favourite son. He told Miss Lee once that both Dick and Dora were like their uncle, Captain Harvey, and Miss Lee remarked that Captain Harvey must have been a remarkably handsome man.

My brother Dick was a year or two older than I when my mother died, and I was nearly ten. I remember on the afternoon when we came home from the funeral that

everything seemed to have stopped and come to an end ; that there was no more light in the house, and that there was no management at all. Our meals were never ready at the proper time, and then were never cooked. We made a holy alliance against the servants, and the servants did the same by us, and as time went on the muddle got more and more terrible. I have known Dick out all night when he was twelve years old, and come home with plovers' eggs, and, I believe, pheasants', which we had for breakfast, under my father's face.

I suppose there never was such a very queer household as ours, for a year or so. Dick was sent to school, but he never seemed to learn anything in particular. He could read, write, and sum, and get on with his Latin grammar, and construe a

little. His terminal reports from school were always nearly the same. Latin, bad ; Greek, very bad ; arithmetic, very bad ; conduct, excellent. My father, very early in Dick's life, began to cast about what he was to do with him, and always ended his cogitations with a deep frown. Dick was one of the most beautiful boys I ever saw or knew ; but, oddly enough, although I always knew that fact, he never did. The maids and his friends told him how handsome he was, but he hardly knew what they meant ; and if they gave him sweetmeats for being handsome, he took them most handsomely. Although his conduct at school was most excellent, it most certainly was not so—I was just going to say ashore, but I mean at home. He was, at home, very boisterous, but his fits of nonsense were alternated by long

spells of sleep. He was perfectly innocent, intensely lazy, and no person I ever heard of saw him out of temper.

If Dick was handsome, and did not know it, Dora was handsome, and most certainly did. She was fantastically conscious of it, and most certainly ought to have been an actress. She was never well-dressed when she was a child, but she had a way of making the most of her shabby frocks from the earliest youth, sweet little coquette as she was. I never saw a bolder or more self-possessed child or woman. I took her out for a walk once when she was very young—not more than nine,—and we came past the Botanical Gardens, and saw flowers inside. Dora said, “I shall go in and ask for some of those,” and I let her go, and watched her. One of the gardeners tried to drive her

back, but she drew herself up, and said,—“I am Miss Harvey, the niece of Lord Ballykilglass, and I want your master, not you.” She got to one of the head functionaries of the garden, and came back loaded with flowers; and she was actually told to come again as soon as those were faded. There was an imperial splendid beauty about the child, as there is about the woman, which nothing can resist. She brightened our squalid house as much as her constantly supplied flowers.

As we began to grow up, our house became more and more muddled and dirty; and, as we cost more, my father became poorer and poorer. The windows got broken, and never mended; the doorstep was never cleaned, and the children filled it, and played on it, except when my two younger brothers, headed by Dora, would

make a raid on them, which generally ended in a free fight in the street, to the scandal of the neighbours. My father did nothing but preach and paint, of both which things he was passionately fond, until one day it became necessary to give Dora some other education and some other manners than those which she was getting at present.

My father had some friends in the West, notably a Devonshire vicar: he sent to him for a governess, offering thirty pounds a year. He could not have sent at a more opportune time. A neighbouring clergyman, a widower, had died, leaving three daughters, nearly unprovided for. The eldest would be only too happy to come at such a salary, which would enable her at once to put the eldest of her youngest sisters to school at Crediton. The vicar told my father that the girl cried with joy

at such an unexpected piece of good fortune, and my father said to me, "Think of *my* being able to make any one happy by a stroke of good fortune! We must make this young lady welcome."

"Dora," he said, that evening, "you have a new governess coming to-morrow."

"If a governess enters the house, I leave it," said Dora, and bounced out of the room.

Miss Lee arrived the next day. The good vicar had said that she was very young, and had the ordinary accomplishments of a lady, which means more or less, as the case may be. She was certainly very young, and I have since extorted from her the confession that she was only just turned sixteen, but there was one thing about her which the vicar never had mentioned, for fear my father should object to

have her in the house with the pupils which my father now-contemplated taking. Miss Lee had that sad fault common to the majority of Devonshire women,—she was most wonderfully beautiful.

She was tired with her journey, and terribly frightened at almost the first new faces which she had ever seen. Biddy, the servant, let her in, and the poor child had some wild idea that she ought to take off her bonnet before she met my father, so she took it off as she came upstairs; Biddy, our Irish girl, threw open the door, and made the startling announcement, “Here’s the new governess come to her situation, and that divil of a cabman would have chated her of two shillings but for me: bad cess to him.” We saw before us this very lovely apparition, with one side of her hair all down on her shoulders,

her bonnet in one hand, and her slender, little purse in another. My father stood for one instant amazed, and then, like the thoroughly chivalrous soul that he was, darted forwards and kissed her, saying—
“My love, we will try to make you happy; indeed we will!”

“Let her have her tay, then,” said Biddy. “Give her her tay. Heavens, be my bid, but she’s the very image of my own sisther.”

I thought that there could not be any strong likeness between the two sisters, for our good-noble Biddy was as like one of her native potatoes in face as may be.

“Go and fetch Dora, Charles,” said my father to me, and I saw him leading the young beauty to the sofa as I went out to seek Dora.

I regret to write down what follows, but Dora had fulfilled her threat of leaving the house, which fact I communicated to my father after searching the house from top to bottom. My father hurried in one way and I in another; but when I returned late, we discovered that Dora had been found by a policeman, in the night, shaking the gates of the Botanical Gardens, to find her friend, the *employé*, and, after a pretty stiff interview, had given her name and address, and had been brought home.

She could not manage Miss Lee, however, because Miss Lee allowed Dora to fancy that she was managing her. In a week Miss Lee had perfectly conquered Dora, by persistent kindness and lack of all visible authority, and also by quickly appealing to Dora's ambition, and showing her, very calmly, and without offence, how

very much she was behind all other young ladies in the way of education.

Miss Lee did all she could in the way of improving the household management, but it was utterly hopeless, the muddle was too great, and she had not the power to give an order. The servants defied her, and she in a short time had to give in. She deteriorated with the rest of us very soon. The demon of muddle was too strong for her, as it had been for us, and she began to come down late for breakfast, to come into church after the Psalms, and to get somewhat weedy in her dress, though this latter circumstance may have come from the fact that nearly the whole of her salary was spent on her sister's schooling, and that what little she had my brother Dick generally borrowed of her to take us for a treat to the Regent's Park, to have

curds-and-whey and ginger-beer. However, we must leave Miss Lee for the present, and pass on to other matters.

It became absolutely necessary that my father should take pupils. Now pupils are very easily got by three sorts of men. Firstly, by professional and experienced bear-leaders, which trade is a trade in itself, different from all others in creation ; and the men who ply it earn their money ; they have to wash the Ethiopian white, and they do it, though the whitewash very often comes off again in the first rub with the world ; and it must be said of these men that they earn their money hardly, and generally honestly. Secondly, by professional crammers, who certainly earn *their* money, whatever the benefit of cram may ultimately be to the State. Third, and lastly, by men of high learning and

noble position in every way, who set the seal of their own noble souls on such lads as are lucky enough to get the chance of their instruction. Now my father came under none of these three categories. He was certainly a man of high and noble soul, but his learning was deficient; he had sacrificed it for art, or a ghost of art. He was no crammer,—for he had little or no diligence. And, again, he was no bear-leader, for his idea of hell begun on this earth was that of a vicious boy. We had only one vicious boy in the house, and my brother Dick discovered him, thrashed him till he was sore, and then told my father, who sent him home the next day, and gave Dick a watch. So it will be perceived that it was not very easy to get pupils, however much my father might want them.

Still, friends helped him, for every one

who had ever known my father loved him. The pupils he had were generally loutish and backward lads ; we shall see nothing or next to nothing of them ; they are only mentioned because out of the money which my father made of them, he managed to keep Dick, and to send me to school. I don't think that they added much to the muddle of the house generally, they had a private muddle in their own rooms, which often smelt of tobacco. I knew very little about them, but I should say that my father did his duty by them in his own way, for he worked diligently and kindly with them ten hours a day. The only one I remember with any distinct individuality was an Irish lad of eighteen, who wanted to marry Biddy, and take her to the United States. I heard of this young man lately in the Sydney mounted police, as a

lieutenant, receiving the thanks of the Corporation of Tintinabarlah for the dash-
ing way in which he broke up a gang of
bushrangers. Hawkins declares that the
young man who did the Brentford forgeries
was a pupil of my fathers, but Hawkins
can no more help laughing than he can
help walking, and if you knew him you
would forgive him. To put matters straight,
however, the famous James Jackson, of
the Brentford forgeries, was not a pupil
of my father at all, but a watchmaker's
apprentice, in no way connected with him.



CHAPTER III.

MY AUNT EDITH.



T was late one summer, when my father and I had a rather close and particular conversation.

I had been working very hard with him at the classics, among the pupils, and I had done very well. I was then, at fifteen, in Euripides and Virgil, and I found that I could hold my own with the best of my father's pupils. One evening my father and I went away to his room together to paint, and as soon as we were alone together he told me that I must daub no more, but that I must go to school.

I went down on my knees to him, and I prayed him not to send me to school. I said I could not bear it, and indeed I doubt not, talked a great deal of wild nonsense. (I beg Mr. Jack Verney to notice that *I* am not the first artist who talked nonsense.) I saw, in short, that unless I was allowed to be an artist, and marry Mary Dickson, I would sooner be dead.

My father passed over the entire question of Mary Dickson. (As a matter of detail, though it has nothing on earth to do with the story, and is no business of yours, I am married to her now: I gave her her freedom, but she said she would rather marry me with one arm than anyone else with two, and as she brought a pretty penny of money, I let her do it.) My father, I say, passed over Mary Dickson entirely, and informed me that he

intended me to go to school, to the university, and into the Church. That the idea of my being an artist was wildly absurd, as I had no talent. He very seldom, too seldom, asserted his will, he said, but now he must assert it, and could allow no further discussion on the subject.

I obeyed, though I was perfectly determined to make my own fortune and his as an artist. We changed the subject, though we went on painting. I say that *we* went on painting: my father painted—I drew in chalks at that time, as far as I remember, from Jullien's "*Études aux deux crayons*," which Jack Verney says are all humbug, but some of which, copied from such men as Horace Vernet, have brought me in a pound or so, by the habit they gave me of bold, swift, French drawing. Jack Verney

may say what he likes about my Frenchism, but he never could draw like a third-class Frenchman.

“Do you know,” asked my father, “that your aunt, Lady Edith, is coming to live with us?”

As this was nearly the third time I had ever heard of her, I confessed that I was quite unaware of the fact. This is the place to say that my father and my aunt, Lady Edith, were the two most secretive beings whom I ever saw; from neither of them you would ever get a hint of what was going to happen until it was a *fait accompli*. It may seem odd that two people, in no way related to one another, should have had the same habit, which might otherwise be supposed to be a family habit, but I draw them simply from life, and such was the case. This is perfectly true. I was always as far

in the confidence of my father as any one. and I do not know to this day what his income was at that time. As for my aunt, Lady Edith Harvey, she was a mystery even to herself. How otherwise could her treatment of me in the Metz business be excused—to leave me there, at Luxembourg? Well, my father told me that she was coming the next evening. And I prepared Dora, Miss Lee, and Dick for it.

Dora said, “I know she is a nasty, two-penny old trot.”

“Dora, said Miss Lee, “you must not talk like that.”

“Must not. Shall if I choose. Now, then?”

Miss Lee rose and left the room, and then Dora began to cry.

“Dick,” I said, “go and fetch Miss Lee back.” And Dick went and fetched her

back, though she was some time in coming. Miss Lee would do most things for Dick, though I never knew him do anything for Miss Lee, except borrow my pocket money to give her presents. However, he brought her back ; but Dora had nailed her colours to the mast, and insisted that she was certain that my aunt would encourage the servants in drinking. Then she kissed Miss Lee, and kissed Dick, refusing to kiss me, because I had been bought over to my aunt's side. I pointed out to her that she was talking the most unutterable nonsense, and after a time she kissed me. Then it was time to go to bed, and Dick wanted to kiss Miss Lee, but seeing that he was of the same age, and about half a head taller than she was, she very politely boxed his ears, and went off with Dora ; after which I went upstairs to our bedroom with

Dick, got him his pipe, and made him lie on his bed in his shirt, with one naked foot dropping towards the floor. When I had finished this, I wrote under it "St. Just plotting the glorious affair of the 10th Thermidor," and went to bed. A nice mess I made of it with this sketch, among others, on a subsequent occasion.

Dick, however, would not have the candle out, would not leave off smoking, and would not get into bed, he had been sleeping half the day, and now he wanted to talk and smoke. Refusing anything which my brother Dick asked for was what I never could do, but on this occasion my task was pretty easy. Dick only wanted to hear about my aunt, and I could not tell him anything.

"Come, Charley," he said, "let's talk, my old boy. I've been to the play to-

night; I've been to the opera, in the gallery, with Will Dickson. Oh! so you fancy you are in love with Mary Dickson."

I was a mere child, little over fifteen; but I was flattered, and liked his nonsense, and laughed.

"Ah! you should have seen the girl I saw to-night; she had to sing a little song, and very badly she sang it, but she was a beautiful young gipsy."

"What was her name?"

"She is a married woman, young as she is; Will Dickson knows all about her; she is Comtesse D'Estrada; the people hissed her, the idiots, because she couldn't sing. She didn't take the name of D'Estrada, however; Will Dickson knows about her from the (yawn) solicitor of the (yawn) Opera—good night!"

The next day my aunt came. I cannot

well describe my Aunt Edith; she was very tall and very handsome; she was dressed in black and blue, which I thought a very singular combination of colours, but she was entirely right; she had dressed up to her jewels, which were nearly priceless sapphires, and which, oddly enough, she wore before us after she had taken her bonnet off, and came down to tea, where we were all ready to receive her. Dora was transcendently good, which was a mercy.

But Dora, like the rest of us, was terribly afraid of her. The gloom was gathering, and our candles were not lit; we knew that she had come, but none of us had dared look at her as she came out of her cab. All at once a tall, dark figure glided in amongst us and sat down by the fire without saying one word.

If she had said anything, why, then (as

Dora said afterwards), somebody else might have said something else, but not one solitary word did my aunt speak for half an hour, at the end of which time Miss Lee offered her tea, to which she said "No."

Dora said, in a whisper, to me, "that woman will make me hang myself." And then my aunt said, "Children, do not whisper."

I never saw such a conquest in my life. I have never seen anything in my life like the effect of that exasperating and terrifying silence. I told her of it afterwards. "My dear," she said, "it was the only way with you riotous young tomfools."

Night came on, and there sat this awful woman, dark as night itself, without speaking one word. Miss Lee's nerves could not stand it, she began to cry. "Leave the room, woman, you are a fool," said my

aunt ; “ you will marry in haste and repent at leisure. Go.”

A long time elapsed before she spoke again, and then she said, “ Where is the girl, Dora ? ”

“ I am here, aunt,” said Dora.

“ Where’s your father.”

“ Doing the Friday service,” said Dora, quite subdued.

“ Stay here till he comes home,” said my aunt ; “ your spell is cast ; your doom is fixed.”

I made a wild effort to break the spell of this awful woman, sitting there in the dark, blacker than the darkness itself. I said, “ Aunt, will you have candles ? ”

“ No,” said my aunt ; “ who spoke ? ”

“ Charles,” I replied.

“ What, the boy who is going to die by violence. No, I won’t have candles.”

How I laugh at all this now. How my Aunt Edith has laughed and cried over it, for so much of her nonsense came true. However, her sole object was to get us into subjection, and she most certainly did that.

When the candles were brought, she ordered off the whole family except myself, and then she looked steadily at me for a long time; at last she said, "Boy, come here." And I went.

* * * *

I cannot now humiliate myself so far as to write down what passed between us. I was only a fool and a boy. For the first time in my life I was initiated into a superstition more false, more godless, and more hideous than those of the Roman Catholics—far, far more so. My aunt Edith believed in these things, and was a conscien-

tious woman. She made me believe in them also for a time, and left me with the idea that I was a liar and a humbug. As, indeed, I was. Take, for example, the conclusion of our interview.

“You are a true and brave medium, my boy. Shall I go round the room again for you?”

“If you like it, aunt.”

My aunt then, the candles being blown out, was floated up to the ceiling. At least, she told me so, and I perfectly believed it. You laugh at a child for telling you that he was mad enough to think that this took place: is the child a worse ass than Lord A—— or Lord L——? and is not this thing going on still? It matters little, only we should like to see the thing actually done. I believed in it, and my aunt's power was supreme over me for some years.



CHAPTER IV.

I GO TO SCHOOL.

NOTHING, however, not even my aunt's fortune-telling proclivities, and her dominion over the house, could prevent my being most inexorably sent to school. I was to go two days after my aunt's arrival, and I remember how very nervous I was when I awoke that dull autumn morning. I was to go to the North-West London Grammar School, in connection with King's College, the school where Mr. Hawkins was second master, and I had only one friend there,

Will Dickson, to whose sister I was attached, and who admired Dora.

It was not as I wished it at all. I hated it. The Bohemianism of my father's house had taken root in my soul, and I rebelled utterly against school. It was fortunate for me that my Bohemianism took the form of an intense love for art, or I might have been a pirate for aught I know. I had been accustomed to come and go as I chose, and to do exactly what I liked. Now I was to be bound down to set seasons and times. It was, to me, unbearable, and I only bore it for the sake of my father, whom I loved then, and love now in a way greater than that I have ever loved any man in the world. I do not back up all my father's sermons; I think, for example, the one on the vision of Ezekiel, the one which began his ruin,

grossly indiscreet, but I think that there is no one in the world like my father. He is abused; but why? Because he spoke at the wrong time. He asked me to go to school, and I went.

I was nervous because I am very sensitive, and I hate "chaff." I knew that I should have a great deal of this, and also that I was not physically strong enough to fight it down. The most miserable morning I ever passed was the morning on which I went to school. I had made the acquaintance of a young art-student, who was at Bruton's, in Frith Street, and I had been there with him. Ah! me, that was a very different school to that to which I was to be condemned; they worked there, and worked hard; they "chaffed," but no one minded it; it was Bohemian utterly, and so, in

my eyes, good. Conceive an artist who is not to some extent Bohemian : will you have the goodness ? You may *conceive* one, but you won't *find* one. I, however, was not destined for Bohemia, but for Kentish Town, and I hated it.

I was so nervous that I started an hour too soon to the school, and consequently arrived an hour too soon. I fancied that I had began my school career by being late, and so I rang the bell. An old, red-faced porter, in a blue uniform, came out and asked me what I wanted. I said that I wanted to come to school.

“ Ah ! ” he said, “ you're a new boy. You're no good. You have begun by coming an hour too soon, and you'll end by coming an hour too late.” After which he went in, and to this day I have the most profound faith in his sagacity, for

his words came exactly true, and my father was written to on the subject; but my aunt, Lady Edith, always destroyed the letters without his seeing them, on the grounds that my destiny must be allowed to work itself out.

While I am waiting this hour before the other boys come, let me tell you all that I know about the North-West London Proprietary Grammar School, in connection with King's College. First, what *was* the history of the mysterious connection between this ill-governed school and King's College? On that point my informant was my brother Dick, who was at King's College School as long as they would keep him (a very short time, after which he was dismissed, as Mr. Swiveller was by Mr. Brass, and recommended to turn his attention to the army, or the

navy, or something very superior in the licensed-victualling line). My brother Dick says that there was no connection at all, but that the little school traded on the reputation of the great one. Dick said that if you wanted your head broke by a delectus you had better say you had been at one of the smaller schools first ; but this is only what Dick said. The only community which I could find out between my school and King's College was that of school books and prayers ; to go further, I should say that our communion was confined to the fact that we used Major's Grammar instead of Valpy's, and that we were entitled to compete for some scholarships at King's College, which none of us ever went near getting.

Yet this school had started, with a perfect fanfaronade of trumpets, in 1832,

and, with its programme of educating the Middle Classes, very cheaply, for the university, the bar, the civil service, and the medical profession, was thought to be a very fine property. Two branches only of the programme came to anything, the School and the Medical School.

The Medical School did not come to much. It lasted two years, and there were twenty-six students in all. At the end of two years the Hall and College announced that they would not qualify young men from that Medical School unless the Museum was made equal to the exigencies of Science. The proprietors, who had been hopeful of gain from the Medical School, had a fancy bazaar in aid of the Museum, but it all came to nothing, and what money was netted was handed over to the boys' school to found two scholarships

of £5 each, tenable for three years, to enable boys to proceed to Oxford or Cambridge without expense. I got one of these, the junior one. Dick had four pounds of it, and I spent nearly a pound in treating Miss Lee and the children. I also gave half-a-crown to the policeman, on what grounds I decline to state. The Medical School came to an end, and left nothing behind it but a strong smell of "subject," and a legend. The smell of subject is in my nose at this moment, and the legend was this:—The last student secreted himself in the school when every one was gone, in order that he might surreptitiously light the gas and carve away on the last subject. The last student, as soon as the place was quiet, stole downstairs in his guilty pursuit of science to the dissecting-room door, where the body was lying; the moon was

shining through the keyhole, and as he stood before the door the keyhole was darkened. He stood transfixed with horror. The handle was turned, the door opened, and the last student saw the last subject standing naked before him, with his hand outstretched. The last student was found by the porter insensible on the stairs next morning, and the last subject was *gone from the dissecting-table*. How many times I have unlocked my room-door, when coming home on a dark night I have expected to find the last subject lying naked on my hearth-rug, like Frankenstein's monster, I cannot say ; but I have a dim belief that it is somewhere now, and if the door were to open at this moment, and it were to walk in, I should know what it was at once. For this frame of mind I am partially indebted to my Aunt Edith.

So I waited at the school gates ; presently round the corner came six howling young lunatics running a race ; the foremost of them, a tall, good-looking young fellow, dashed at me, and said, " You young devil, you are a new boy," and at once caught my cap off my head and threw it down the next area.

" Shame, Jack Chetwynd," said a voice I knew well, that of Will Dickson, " bullying a new boy the first morning ; he will have to knock at 28 and get his cap, and will be certainly reported to the Doctor on his first day. I say it is a shame."

" Knock at 28 and get it yourself, then," said Jack Chetwynd. " You are spoony over his sister."

Will grew white with fury, but he had no time to advance. I dashed at Chetwynd, and struck him fairly on the mouth. There

was one deadly look at me for one instant out of his blue eyes, which I can remember now. I wonder if he ever really forgot that blow? I cannot say; but I never saw the same deadly look directed at me again from that moment until all was over between us for ever. I have seen it directed against others, but never against me.

The others cried out that we must fight after school; and I, now that my passion was over, was very sorry that my career was to begin with a stand-up fight in which I should get a most terrible thrashing; but the lad had mentioned my sister, and I would fight until I was taken to the Gray's Inn Road Hospital if it were necessary.

Jack Chetwynd laughed. "You are one of the right sort," he said. "I like you. I was a blackguard. I am cock of this

school, and so I can take a blow from a youngster like you without any disgrace. Will Dickson, old fellow, what do you say?"

"You are acting most generously, and like yourself, Jack," said Will, with that flush in his face which a good deed always brought into it. "Ah, Jack, if you were always like this!"

"Don't preach; give me your hand, young 'un."

Here the bell sounded, and they all fled, leaving me capless. A few nearly belated ones hurried past me, and then the gate was shut, and I was left alone with one boy, who was late also, so hopelessly late for prayers that he preferred the contemplation of my own woes to the wild chance of decreasing his own. He introduced himself.

“My name is Von Lieber; I am a German. You have made a pretty beginning of it. Where is your cap?”

“Chetwynd threw it down that area.”

“Don’t peach; come, and I will get it for you; a dozen lines or so don’t much matter to me.” And so he took me up to No. 28, and we rang at the bell.

The master of the house, a wizened, little old man, came out, and he said, “You young vagabonds, as soon as I have had my breakfast I’ll call on the Doctor.”

“Don’t do that, sir,” said Von Lieber, “this is a new boy, and they bullied him and threw his cap down your area. I am piling up no end of lines by staying by him. Do let us have it quick.”

“Run down and get it, then,” he said to me, and as I came back with it I heard him say to Von Lieber, “You are a good

lad, and I will get you through the scrape with the Doctor.”

“Don’t do that, sir,” said Von Lieber, eagerly ; “if you do, the young’un will have to peach on Jack Chetwynd. I’ll take my lines.” And so we departed.

I was terribly late, and on the very first morning too. The porter received me sardonically, and reminded me of his prophecy that morning, which was encouraging. I was directed to the head master’s door, where I knocked, and was told to come in.

The dreadful Doctor was sitting writing at his table ; he demanded my pleasure.

“I am a new boy, sir.”

“Your proposition is impossible, sir,” said Dr. M. from behind his spectacles.

“The new boys have all been passed into their various classes a quarter of an hour ago.”

“My cap, sir, was chucked——” I begun.

“I beg of you not to argue with me, sir. A new boy who comes twenty minutes late inaugurates (I strongly object to the word as being classically false, but I use it in my indignation) a career which cannot end well. Boy, you will come to no good.”

I was of very much the same opinion myself. Indeed, I never had a friend except Will Dickson and little Herbert, who did not tell me so. But I have always faced facts, and on this occasion I faced them by entirely agreeing with Dr. M., and not saying one solitary word.

“I know you, sir,” said Dr. M., “and I know all about you. You are inclined for Art, are you, sir? Let me catch you at it here.”

I still remained silent, promising myself a great caricature of the Doctor, with his red face and his hair on end.

“Don’t you know, sir, that excellence in the Fine Arts is the certain sign that the nation which produces that excellence is in a state of decadence? Look at the Greeks, look at the Romans!”

Finding that I had now something to say, I said, “Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Constable, Wilkie,—did they appear in a decadence of national power? I pass over the time, the best time of all, when Cromwell was dictator, and Milton was poet laureate; but is Germany dead because she has Kaulbach and Piloty?”

“How long hast thou professed apprehension?” cried he. “Is not France dead with her Gérôme, and her Horace

Vernet? And is Munich the soul of Germany? God save Germany if she rests on the bruised reed of Bavaria. Boy, what books are you in? Boy, you must not argue here; you are here to submit. If I had not submitted when I was your age I should not have been here."

It struck me that he might have been much better anywhere else, and that a good soldier or good statesmen had been spoiled in the schoolmaster, but I never said anything except that I was in Euripides and Virgil.

"You had better go straight to Hawkins, I think," he said. "Do you know anything of Sophocles?"

"I know a good bit of the Antigone, sir."

He sat for a long time lost in thought, and I believe in prayer. Then he rose

and left the room, and I remained wondering. When he came back he was subdued, and laid his hand on my shoulder. "I have been," he said, "to Mr. Netherclift, the master of the Lower Sixth, to see if he would take you, but his remove is full, and you must go into the Fifth. Hawkins, of the Fifth, is one of the best men that ever walked, but in this class you will be for two terms. Will you listen to me?"

"Yes, sir."

"In that class you will have the great temptation of your life. Come nobly through it. I wish that Netherclift would have taken you, and spared you this temptation, but he says that you must go through it."

I don't know why I was affected, but I was. I suspect that people like myself

are easily affected, and that in the perfectly governed state of the future we shall all be Draconically put to death, and leave the virtuous citizens to bore one another until their time comes. Having once compassed the death of an innocent German I cannot be regarded as a virtuous citizen; in fact, I consider the perfectly virtuous citizen as somewhat of a nuisance. I may state, however, that men like myself have redeeming qualities, for I conceived on this day a love and confidence for Dr. M. and Mr. Netherclift which I have never lost.



CHAPTER V.

MR. HAWKINS AGAIN.



T was Monday morning, and Mr. Hawkins having seen his removes made, had gone away to gossip with the other masters, and had left his boys to take care of themselves, as was his universal rule on Monday morning. As I approached the door I heard a sound, as it were of many waters; this was made by Hawkins's boys, who were, as I afterwards discovered, occupied in a free fight, carried on generally on Mondays, by throwing books at one another. On this occa-

sion, as I afterwards found out, the fight had been varied by something new; a dozen of them had set on Von Lieber taken his breeches off, folded them up, and put them on Mr. Hawkins's table in his private room. I, of course, knew nothing whatever about this as I turned the handle and went into the class-room. There was a dead silence as I entered, because they thought that I was Hawkins himself. I found them in deep and profound study as I closed the door and stood amongst the whole fifty of them, wondering where I was to sit.

They saw me all at once, and the whole fifty came on me like one boy. I saw one boy open the door behind me and bolt out, and then I was down on the floor with half a dozen on me and half a hundred more longing to get at me. They thought

I was Hawkins, and in their fury at the "sell" they said that they would kill me.

They did not hurt me; they only pulled me about; and the whole thing was so unutterably ridiculous that I could not help laughing whenever I got breath. I do not believe that English boys are as a rule brutal to one another. Alphonse Le Roy, who was in the same class at the very same time, told me that French boys are far greater bullies than English boys. I was black and blue afterwards, but I freely confess that in that crowd not one boy hit me as hard as I had hit Jack Chetwynd that morning. After a time they left off pulling me about, and I got up, found my breath and my voice.

"You are a pretty lot," I said when I got on my legs. "You are a dozen to

one, that's what you are. Come on, any one of you. Will Dickson, you will see fair play."

"It ain't a fighting job, old man," said Will. "Come and sit down. It's only the way of the class. We thought it was Hawkins. Come up here and sit with us; he is one of the right sort I tell you, boys." And so I went up and sat with them, only too glad to make friends.

Jack Chetwynd sat next to me, and when I looked at him I saw that his face was marked with the blow I had given him that morning. I was terribly sorry: I cannot say how very sorry I was. I went to him and I said, "Can you forgive me?"

"What for?" he asked.

"The blow I gave you this morning."

"Oh, it was you who hit me, was it?" he said, just as if he had not known.

“Yes, I will forgive and forget. Unless, of course, you would like to fight after school.”

I told him that I could not fight him, that I was in no way up to his weight.

“Then we won’t fight, you mouse-eyed little chick. You shall be one of us. You must not peach about any shines, you know.”

I told him that I thought it the first duty of every school-boy to hold his tongue, and he was perfectly satisfied. He told Will Dickson in my presence that I was a blazing young trump, and Will Dickson said that he was perfectly aware of that long ago ; then there was a terrible and sudden silence. The class-room door leading out of the corridor (I beg you to mark this, it was the door out of the *corridor*, not out of Hawkins’s private room)

was thrown open, and in walked Hawkins himself.

The boy Von Lieber meanwhile had been sitting without his trousers, having given them up as a bad job, for whenever he tried to get to Hawkins's private room for them he had been stopped by a committee of twenty lunatics. Hawkins did not at first perceive that Von Lieber had not got his trousers on, but began by calling over the names. My name came last, and when I answered to it he demanded in a lofty tone what I meant by sitting there instead of at the bottom of the class. As his eye passed me it lighted on Von Lieber's bare legs, and he stood like a statue for one instant. But he was a man of genius and a man of action ; that boy's bare legs were quite enough for him, he would act first and inquire afterwards.

“The whole class will stay in until the end of term. The whole class will write out fifty lines every day for a week. The boy Von Lieber is expelled unless he instantly produces his breeches and lays them on this desk.”

“They are in your private room, sir,” said Von Lieber.

“Boy! boy! is this mendacity or impudence?”

“I only know, sir,” said Von Lieber, a very dogged boy, “that the Kentish Town gang took my breeches off, and put them in your room, where you will find them.”

“Would you have the goodness, sir, to point out to me one, only one, of the boys who did this?”

“No, sir; you can’t ask a German gentleman to do that. I should like my

breeches back well enough ; but we don't like sneaking in this class, we leave that to the Fourth and Lower Sixth."

"Good boy, good boy," said Hawkins. "Mind you never sneak on one another. You ought not to have stolen his breeches ; just think of the position the boy would have been in in a case of fire. But you should never sneak on one another. Never do that ; I'll never forgive a boy that. I go out in the world and see no end of sneaking, and I never care for a man who does it ; keep your *sacramentum militare*. Boy, go into my room and get your breeches."

Von Lieber, who had had his shirt between his thighs, rose to go ; but he was too late—he was anticipated. I mentioned above that, when I was down on the floor, a boy had let himself out by

the class-room door. That boy was Heath, now an archdeacon, who bought a great picture of mine the other day, and, what is more, paid for it with a cheque which allowed Mary and me to go by Pacific Railway to California, and so by steamer to Melbourne, where she and I first saw Australia. This boy Heath, however, was not in luck on this occasion ; far from it.

Heath, when the row which followed on my entrance had begun, went vaguely out into waste places, and then thought that it would be a fine thing to go into Hawkins's room, put on his cap and gown, and frighten us all. He did this, and on Hawkins's table he saw Von Lieber's breeches, which he determined to redeem for that German Ephebus. Consequently, when Von Lieber advanced towards Hawkins's private room, the door was suddenly

thrown open, Von Lieber's breeches were thrown in, and Heath, in Hawkins's cap and gown, appeared at the door, saying, in a voice almost exactly like Hawkins's, "Fools and idiots, is Bedlam broke loose?"

I was seized with a terrible fit of laughing, from which I failed to recover during the rest of the day. Hawkins, however, darted suddenly at Heath, and got him by the throat. He hurled him out of the room and took him to the head master, after which he returned, sat down at his desk, and said:—

"We will now read the sixty-seventh Psalm; after which the boy Harvey will go on at the fifty-second line of the fourth book of Homer's *Illiad*."

This seemed to me a more transcendent absurdity than the other, and I abandoned myself to laughing in hopeless despair. If

I had been burnt on the spot I could not have helped it. I knew he could not kill me, and if he had got me expelled I did not much care, so I gave mouth to it and distinguished myself. I do not know what Hawkins threatened me with at present, or in future, but I know that I could not help laughing to save my life. Will Dickson says that I had eighteen hundred lines to write out by the next morning and to stay in for the rest of my life, but Hawkins collared me and put me out of the room as utterly hopeless. I immediately walked away to the head master's room, I burst-open the door, and there stood Heath on a stool in the middle of it.

“What is your pleasure, sir?” said Dr. M.

“I have been turned out of the room, sir, for laughing, and I want to be expelled.

I can't stand this, and I want to study Art."

"Come here," said Dr. M., and I went to him. "My boy, don't be silly," he said; "you are worthy of better things. Heath, come here with me."

So he took Heath and me hand in hand into Hawkins's room, and when we got there, he said, "Hawkins, I have forgiven these two boys." Hawkins seemed extremely glad to hear it, and the rest of the day passed over pretty evenly. My impression is, that if the whole number of tasks imposed by Hawkins that afternoon had been done, a large number of rising barristers and ecclesiastics would be there still, though some of them would be over forty now. Hawkins, however, always remitted the tasks, and so it came to the same thing in the end.



CHAPTER VI.

HOME.

AMONG all my school-fellows, I took to only three very particularly, or, to be more correct, only took to two. One, however, took very strongly to me, and that one was Jack Chetwynd. To him my aunt took a most inveterate dislike; while my father and my sister Dora admired him immensely.

Jack Chetwynd helped to make my fortune, I will allow; but to a certain extent he was my evil genius. Every effort

I made for good was utterly thwarted by him; every bit of good advice which I got from Will Dickson and from Von Lieber was laughed at, and he was entirely determined that I should be as idle as he could make me.

He was sixteen and more, I rather younger; but he was a man at that age, I only a boy, and I got no good at all from him, for he was vicious. Von Lieber and Will Dickson used to warn me of him, but he completely had me in his power. His influence over me is past talking of now, but it shaped my life—it shaped it very greatly, indeed. I give you my confidence when I say that now I believe him to have been capable of any tolerable amount of evil; but I did not believe it when I first knew him. His men hated him with an instinct higher than my own. I do not

hate him now. Let me also say for the man that he respected, Will Dickson, that Will Dickson respected him. I suppose that in his case, as in others, physical power and physical beauty have their value in this world.

Von Lieber and Will Dickson were both by far his superiors in brains and diligence, yet his father was a richer man than either of their fathers, so Jack Chetwynd fairly held his own with them by getting tuition at home. Well, I have said all I need about him when I say that he was physically a splendid creature, and that he exercised a great influence over me.

Von Lieber was a noble giant of a German lad, with all the wise persistent stupidity of his race. I remember now that he had an odd way of breaking out whistling suddenly in class, on which occa-

sions Hawkins would suddenly descend on him and bang him with anything between a Buttman's Lexologus or a Valpy's Horace. Von Lieber always took his punishment in a stolid manner, looking Hawkins respectfully in the face. Whereas, an American boy, on one occasion, kicked Hawkins on the grounds of the same treatment, and, indeed, was taken all along the corridor to the head master's room kicking and scolding. I never more thoroughly trusted any human being than I did Von Lieber; but, oh, how I have lain in my bed through those long horrible hours cursing him. Yet he might arrive here while I am writing, and we, in the German fashion, would be in one another's arms.

"The world goes up, and the world goes down,
And then the sunshine follows the rain."

We, however, have not much to do with Von Lieber at present. The ruin he brought on me has been forgiven ten times over. He acted after the way of his nation : a lie is a lie with them.

Will Dickson was in some respects like Von Lieber ; but he was a youth such as I have never seen out of England. By no means quick in perception (little Le Roy, the French boy, could see a mathematical problem quicker than Will Dickson) but always safe. Will's courage was quite as great as Von Lieber's, and oddly enough Jack Chetwynd was somehow afraid of him. On one occasion, in the corridor, Jack Chetwynd told Von Lieber and Will that they were both liars ; that, of course, meant a fight, and they both challenged at once. Jack Chetwynd selected the German at once, in preference to Will, who

was a much smaller man, to every one's astonishment. Fights then were carried on in the half-hour from one to half-past one, and this one lasted for two days, Will Dickson being bottle-holder for the German. Von Lieber was a bad boxer, and got heavily mauled; but it was only stopped at the end of the second day by Hawkins, who had heard the account of every round from me, and who thought that it was going in favour of the German boy, a thing which his patriotism would not stand. When Jack Chetwynd was all right again, Will solemnly asked him to fight, but Jack Chetwynd said that he had had fighting enough.

At this time, like the idle monkey I was, I got a capital portrait of Will done in school hours, and went home to my father's study, and painted it. I had previously got

a capital portrait of my sister Dora, and I painted in Will Dickson, with his arm round her neck. This gave rise to a most terrible storm. Dora was furious. She happened to come into the room and saw the picture, and she *ordered* my father to destroy it. He kept it.

She had never seen him at that time, although she soon afterwards did so ; for, uncomfortable and untidy as our house was, I thought that there could be no harm in asking Von Lieber and him to come to supper, and I got my father's permission, and very nervously awaited the result, more particularly as my aunt announced a foreign young lady as her guest—a young lady of very singular attractions and high family. However, we got ready and waited for our guests, prepared to give them the best reception we could.

The plates were grimy. The butter had hairs in it, which Dr. Letheby, without spectacles or microscope, would pronounce *not* to be cow's hair on his oath. The cups were of different patterns, likewise the saucers, but no attempt had been made to bring cups and saucers of the same pattern together; probably on the theory of a recent school of painters, that, arrange matters how you will, Nature will bring it all into a great harmonious pictorial whole; as, indeed, she will if you will give her atmosphere, which they won't. No; the cups and saucers were like somebody's pictures, too near the eyes not to make you doubt his theory. And the spoons, the silver ones the colour of aluminium, and the lead ones the colour of iron. The pewter teapot had got its nose knocked on one side. The tea was weak

and washy. The pupils were rude and shy ; and the atmosphere was of that faint, sickly kind, which is only to be smelt at a cheap private tutor's, I hope—an atmosphere smelling of bread and butter, brown sugar, weak tea, and frowsy boys. But in the middle of it, imperially beautiful, sat my aunt, Lady Edith, calm, clean, quiet, complaisant, with her face set—no, not set, she never had the strength to *set* her face, let us say fixed, into an expression of quiet, good-natured calmness. And beside her was Dora, watching her intently, and setting up her large pica into diamond, copying her in kitcat, making the quaintest little imitation of my aunt, that you can conceive.

My father was uncommonly well up in the Peerage ; whether because his brother had married a duke's daughter, or from

natural inclination, I cannot say. But I have yet to learn that there is any harm in that kind of knowledge, or that it necessarily makes a man a toad-eater. I only know that I never knew a man less of a toady than my father. He erred considerably on the other side.

My aunt and he, however, talked to one another about who was who to their heart's content, and I saw Dora listening. I had never heard that kind of talk before, and it struck me as being tiresome. But I had Mary's hand in mine under the table, and could watch Dora at the same time. I saw how she was drinking it all in, and I said to myself, "we shall have all this *rechauffé* to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" Dolt that I was, I did not give full credit to that eager, hard, hungry brain of Dora's. To-morrow!

We had it to-night. That child had got up the whole grammar of the thing in an hour. A certain professor said to me once, "I learnt Spanish last night." And he had done so. But Dora beat him. He had been up all night, and had found out the variations between Latin and Spanish, and wanted nothing more than a Spanish dictionary, time, and inclination, to accomplish Spanish. Dora had gotten herself the slang in an hour over her tea, and only waited for facts to be supplied to her. Meanwhile, as an experiment, she used up those she had.

Miss Lee took the children to bed. I was ready to find her shoes for her, for I liked Miss Lee; but her shoes did not come off this time, as they usually did at meal times, for she had on a very tolerably

well fitting pair of Dora's. But the moment she was out of the room my aunt began talking about her to my father.

"I like that girl, George," she said.
"Who is she?"

"She is nobody," said my father.

Was she not, indeed? You had not heard Dora yet, you see.

"My dear," said Dora, to her aunt, in a fiddle-faddle voice, kept well within her teeth, as near the right thing as anything I have heard lately. "My dear, her mother was a Kekewich; one of those *innumerable* Devonshire Kekewiches, you know; and *her* mother was a Buller, one of those equally *innumerable* Devonshire Bullers, you know. And this mother of hers, the Kekewich girl, before she knew what she was about, went off with this young Lee. That is all I know of

the matter, except that they were as poor as rats."

"But who was this Lee child? Was he one of the D—ll—ns?"

"My *dear* creature," said Dora, "he was a Devonshire parson, curate, something of that kind, without a rap. And her people never forgave them; did not recognize them for a long time; indeed, never really took them up, for *his* father had been in trade, or something or another. And that is all *I* know about it, and all *I want* to know, for the girl seems to me respectable enough."


After an hour and a half's experience of a particular kind of talk, this was the way in which Dora informed my aunt of the simple fact that Miss Lee's mother had married a poor clergyman. Would she have made one of the greatest actresses

in Europe? I was strongly inclined to think so. The first tragedy gentleman of Dickens, who blacked himself all over whenever he played Othello, never could have more heartily thrown himself into a part than my sister Dora.



CHAPTER VII.

MADAME D'ESTRADA, AND ONE OTHER GUEST.

UR first arrival was Madame D'Estrada, who was ushered in by Biddy, the girl, as Mrs. Straddle. I had expected to see a very tall, Spanish woman; on the contrary, I saw only a very prettily dressed girl, almost child, of about sixteen as I guessed, yet she was Madame even now. May I take your confidence, and say, "Bother the woman." I was totally at a loss to conceive what connection my aunt had with her; but my aunt always kept her

own counsel. I cannot at this moment say whether or not I should have committed assault and battery on her there and then, and damaged her beauty, had I known the trick she was going to play us. I think not. We shall have enough of her before we have done, and so just now I will only say that she was a very beautiful, gipsy-like girl, who, as Dora said, made eyes. I remarked, even then, one little circumstance which revealed much to me afterwards. She went to the piano and opened it; whereupon my aunt, Lady Edith, drew her away, shut down the piano with a slam, and said, "You fool!" Madame D'Estrada submitted, and said that she wanted porter. That was procurable in our establishment, and Madame D'Estrada had it. I poured her out a tumblerful, and she gave a little

scream, and made me fill her out some into a wineglass, and that wineglassful was all that she took to drink that night.

When she had drunk it she looked through and through me with those pestilent eyes of hers, and, waving the glass over, sang, with such notes as I have never heard since,

“ Drink, drink, the blood-red wine ! ”

“ Madame,” said my aunt, suddenly, “ I forbid you to sing in the Teutonic languages.” And then she was quite quiet. I was wondering why my aunt should have inflicted an amiable, beautiful lunatic on us, when I saw that she was sitting with her chin on her hand, and bringing her eyes on me. Happening to be in love at that time I took not the

least notice of her. Then I heard my aunt say to her, "The first is Norma," and then the door was opened, and Dora sailed into the room, with her head in the air, with Miss Lee and my brother Richard in her wake.

Dora bowed to Madame D'Estrada on being introduced, and then I believed that we were all in Bedlam together, for Madame D'Estrada went out of the room, shut the door, and came in just as Dora did. There was a difference, but I did not see it. My aunt seemed cross, and said to Madame D'Estrada, "Not at all, nothing like it."

Dora seemed very puzzled. Miss Lee did not seem to be so in the least degree. She believed entirely in my aunt, and concluded that it was all right. She sat next my brother Dick, now a very hand-

some young man, and Madame D'Estrada glowered at both of them. It seemed to me that this proceeding gave immense pleasure to my aunt, for I heard her say to Madame D'Estrada, "That is very good, that is very good, indeed."

Will Dickson came next, with Von Lieber. Mary Dickson was there before, and I sat with her the whole evening, as happy as a king, remarking very little of what went on. I saw certainly that Von Lieber sat entirely with Madame D'Estrada, and that the pair talked in German. I also noticed that Dora sat with my aunt, and refused to go near Will Dickson. I remembered my foolish portrait of the pair, and wished that I had never painted it. I told Mary the whole story in a corner, and she told me that I had been very foolish. After which we kissed one

another in the passage. The reader need not trouble himself about *her*; she has nothing to do with us at all, unless one chose to remark that, if we had all been as she was and is, there would be no materials for such a story as this.

My father made himself agreeable, as he always did, and when we thought the last of our guests was gone, and returned to the room, we found that we were mistaken. Von Lieber had lingered. My father's instinctive idea of hospitality was aroused at once. "My dear boy," he said, "stay with us to-night."

"I should like to, sir," he said, "but you have no room."

"You can sleep with Charlie," said my father; "but then, where is Dick to sleep?"

"I'll sleep on the sofa," said Dick,

who was, of all the people I ever met with in this wicked world, the most kind-hearted.

“But,” urged my father, “Charley could sleep on the sofa just as well.”

“You let them sleep together,” said Dick. “It is the last time they will ever do so. I have heard news, eh? Von Lieber. Shall I salute you as cornet?”

“It is true, sir,” said Von Lieber. “I have only my examination to pass, and I am a soldier for the rest of my life.”

“I wish that I had been as my brother was,” said my father.

“I go to Germany at once, sir,” said Von Lieber. “Let me be with Charles this one night. Germany’s troubles are getting too hard to be borne, and I shall be in the cold earth some day.”

So it was arranged, and my brother

Dick went on to the sofa by our side, while Von Lieber and I lay down together.

“I should have liked to see that D’Estrada woman again,” said Von Lieber, as he was falling asleep. “I can’t forget her at all. I wish you could get me her portrait. Are you asleep, buffer?” to my brother.

The buffer was quite wideawake by a singular coincidence, and remarkably talkative. He said “Hang the woman!” which was a long speech for him.

“I am going to sleep, Charlie,” said Von Lieber to me. “Shake hands, for I am off to-morrow. Good night, and dream of Mary.”

I put my right hand gently into his, for I was very sleepy; his was locked in mine for a time, and then fell away. I sometimes think now that if both our

right hands had been cut off then it would have been far better. What did Cain think about when he went out from among the presence of men? When I did I thought about Von Lieber. However, Von Lieber, for the present, disappears.



CHAPTER VIII.

HOME AGAIN.

LIEBER was gone, and I was left now entirely between two stools, Will Dickson and Jack Chetwynd: had I known it, between Art and Common Life. Few people could have been weaker than I was at that time, and, in addition, I had no guidance. Jack Chetwynd insisted on coming to see me at home, and I could not refuse. I had been quite a long time at school, and I had never once asked him to our dingy house. One afternoon he insisted on coming home

with me, and I submitted. I hated the fact of his seeing our house, for he was a dandy, whereas Will and Von Lieber were not. He came, and on going upstairs we found Dora at the little piano, playing.

It was a common little piano, the same one from which Madame D'Estrada had been ordered by my aunt. But to Dora it was a grand piano, the room was a concert-room, and she was singing before a large and delighted audience. The dream came to an end suddenly, as I said, "Dora, my dear, here is Chetwynd, of whom you have often heard me speak."

She turned, and looked at him. I may wish now that she had never seen him, but I remember with intense pride, even now, the flash of admiration which went over his face when she turned; face to face were two of the most beautiful creatures I

had ever seen, and in their four eyes I saw at once mutual admiration.

“How nice of you to bring your friend home,” said Dora. “We are rather dull here, Mr. Chetwynd, for our pupils are always dunces ; if they were not, Pa would have no pupils at all, poor dear. I have really no society except that of my brothers. Dick is stupid and handsome, and Charles is clever and ugly. I hope we shall be good friends. Do you sing ?”

“I sing in the streets, and also at church, but I sing very badly,” said Chetwynd.

“I sing very badly, too,” said Dora ; “but then I make believe to myself that I sing very well, and so it all comes to the same thing in the end. I was making believe when you came in. You have to make believe a good deal in this house to

get on at all, as you will find if you come here often. Oh, here you are Miss Lee, this is Mr. Chetwynd, my brother Charles's friend; I think you know. Why, here is Aunt, Lady Edith. My Lady, this is Mr. Chetwynd, a fellow pupil of Charles's."

"Yorkshire?" said my aunt, graciously.

"We are the Cadets of the great family, madame," said Chetwynd, gracefully; "but like some great Scotch houses, we have gone into trade, and have not done badly."

"I am sure I wish that some of our family would go into trade," said my aunt. "The old Venetian families did, and there were few people more respectable. The Poli made a great family in trade, and so have the Rothschilds. It is far better for the honour of a house to mind business than to swindle foolish tradesmen." In which sentiment I agree with my aunt.

“Miss Lee,” said my aunt, “I want my tea. Like a good-natured soul as you are, a real Devonshire woman, let us have tea.”

Miss Lee looked at her with a rather scared expression.

“I see,” said my aunt, “the servant’s in rebellion, I suppose. Ring the bell.”

Miss Lee rang it, and then went and sat on the music stool, nervously playing the piano. I believe that if there had been an umbrella in the room she would have put it up. Dora ranged alongside of my aunt, much as the 42nd Highlanders might form alongside of the Grenadier Guards in case of an expected battle. From a glance which Dora threw back at me, I understood that I was considered to be in the reserve force, and that I was not to open fire without orders, but was then to pound away until she blew “Cease firing.” I

knew that there was some domestic row in our ill-ordered household, and I wished Jack Chetwynd was at the bottom of the sea.

The bell not being answered to Miss Lee's pull, Dora, with a glance at my aunt, took the place of Sacristan, and began to toll steadily without leaving off. After about five minutes Biddy appeared, very much flushed, and wished to know if her Ladyship had been ringun?

Biddy looked towards Miss Lee; Miss Lee looked at Biddy, and Biddy shook her head at Miss Lee. I knew there was something wrong, because those two hunted in couples.

"Is it the tay your Ladyship was spaking of?" said Biddy.

"Yes, I want my tea," said Aunt Edith.

"Shure, her Ladyship's tay," said Biddy.

"I've been out, my Lady, down to Wap-

ping, to see me brother's cousin off to New York, and the ship was in the strame, my Lady, and the boats was taking all the immigrants aboard, and the water was very rough, my Lady, and Mick Reilly (he's a Whiteboy), says to me that it was the wicked English Government trying to drown um. And I says, Mick, says I, surely they are only practizing their sea sickness. Was it tay that your Ladyship was spaking of?"

"Yes," said my aunt.

"Then it's divil a drop your Ladyship's likely to get," said Biddy, "unless you or I put a stone in our stocking's end, and fight for it. The cook and the housemaid say that there was one Irishwoman in the house before you came, meaning me: by the second Irishwoman they mean your Ladyship."

I gave an angry snarl, and came forward. To be disgraced like this before Jack Chetwynd ! In an instant, my aunt and Dora were upon me, and pushed me back. My aunt said quietly, “ Go down, my dear Biddy, and send those two women up to me ; ” and Biddy departed.

The women did not come, but the tea did, brought up by Biddy. At the latter end of the meal, when we were all comfortable, I noticed that my aunt had on her bonnet and shawl. She only said that she was going to step out for a short time ; and, in fact, she, knowing what she was about, did her work very quickly. We were getting more and more sociable,—Dora had relaxed, and was telling Jack Chetwynd a very long story about the appearance of the devil in Camden-town in broad daylight ; my brother Dick was

sleepily listening; Miss Lee had an attitude of attention, for which I could not account,—when we heard the street-door open with a latch-key, and Miss Lee and Dora bounced up, and, running into the hall, put themselves in front of the stairs which ran down into the kitchen.

My aunt entered the room with a tall gentleman in blue, closely shaven. She said to me at once, “Go to Miss Lee and your sister.” I went, and Jack Chetwynd went with me, while my aunt, the gentleman in blue, and a hitherto concealed policeman went upstairs. Dora and Miss Lee took us down into the kitchen, where were the cook and housemaid drinking beer and eating bread and cheese.

Dora looked at me as we went in; and I once more felt that I was as a reserve corps in a great fight. I was not brought

to the front,—it was not necessary. Cook began.

“We don’t want any of you young people here,” she said; “this is *my* kitchen.”

Dora grew deadly pale. She could not speak. What she would have said had she spoken I cannot tell. Miss Lee spoke.

“On what grounds do you call this *your* kitchen?”

“Highly-tighty!” said cook.

“That does not happen to mean anything,” said Miss Lee, “and is no answer to my question.” I kissed Miss Lee on the spot. As I was my brother Dick’s brother she did not box my ears.

“Highly-tighty! is no answer to us,” said Dora. “*Your* kitchen, indeed!”

“Dora, be quiet,” said Miss Lee, gently.

“I sha’n’t,” said Dora. “That woman

is a thief. What have you got in your boxes upstairs?"

Cook, as I saw, at once changed her tone, not to a very great extent, but somewhat. Before, she had been coolly contemptuous; now, she grew angrily indignant.

"I wish I had never come into this beggarly house," she said; "I wish that I had been dead before I entered it. But I'll have my revenge on some of you. You, Miss Lee, you would like me to tell all I know."

I looked in Miss Lee's face, as cook said this, and I saw nothing there but honesty, purity, and good humour. From that moment I knew that Miss Lee, with all her fantastic untidiness, was as true as gold.

"You may say anything you like about me, cook," she said. "Whether anybody

will believe you or not is quite another matter.”

“And Miss Dora has called me a thief,” bawled cook. “Let us go up and look at my boxes, then,—I’ll start first.”

“I am afraid that you will be too late,” said Dora. “My aunt, Lady Edith, has stepped round to Mr. Clarkson’s, and has got a search-warrant. The inspector of police and my aunt are at your boxes now.”

I never saw a woman brought to bay before. This woman knew that her game was up, and that my Aunt Edith, assisted by Miss Lee and Dora, had checkmated her. She was coarse, stupid, ignorant, and, to a certain extent, vicious. She knew that a long term of penal servitude was before her inexorably. She had stolen from my aunt’s room some lace, a pair of

paste buckles, sundry trinkets, and, terrible to relate, that awful jewel the Larko Sandarga, which she hardly thought worth the taking. Her object was to get turned out of our house for insolence, for she had secured another place. She could have done that perfectly well, had she not robbed my aunt, a woman quite as cunning as she was. Cook's move was to refuse to send up our tea, and get into a row with us in that way; but Miss Lee and Dora had been watching her in my aunt's bedroom, and were prepared. I was, as a matter of course, told nothing, and I selected this very day of all days to bring Jack Chetwynd to my father's house. I asked Chetwynd not to say a word about our *ménage* at school, and Jack Chetwynd said that the affairs of Dora's brother were a sacred matter to him.

Here was a new misfortune on our most unhappy house. Jack Chetwynd had fallen in love with my sister. I remember that I used to say my prayers at that time, and I remember that I prayed most earnestly that Dora should not fall in love with Jack Chetwynd. Let us tell the truth, that prayer was to a certain extent answered.

But to return to the cook. My aunt, who would have compounded any felony under the sun, got back her Larko Sandarga, and declined to prosecute. The lace and whole heaps of other plunder went, both inspector and magistrate were excessively angry, but as there is no public prosecutor in England, cook got clear off. My aunt had an idea that she could be "bound down." I am not at all sure what she meant: but she thought it

necessary to go and live for a week in seclusion with Countess Spezzia, just opposite the Zoological Gardens.

As a matter of detail, the Countess Spezzia is one of the mainstays of the Zoological Society. That she has given four elephants, I do not believe, because I have never seen four elephants there. Still Jamrack says that she is his best customer, and she certainly presented a Choiropotamus. However, this has nothing to do with the story. My aunt retired to the Countess Spezzia's, and sent us all one morning an invitation to come at half-past seven, to go through the Gardens, and to breakfast with her afterwards. This invitation extended to Jack Chetwynd and to any of my boy friends I chose to bring. I naturally thought of Will Dickson and Little Herbert.



CHAPTER IX.

THE LION.

IT was a most pleasant summer morning when we knocked at the door of the Countess Spezzia. There were Dora, Miss Lee, Jack Chetwynd, Will Dickson, Little Herbert, and myself. Aunt Edith came out at once and escorted us. I remember that Dora was petulant because the Countess did not come. She told her aunt that a real live foreign Countess was better worth seeing than all the beasts, but my aunt explained to her that the Countess was very old and infirm, having

been frightened into ill health during the French Revolution, and only saved by the downfall of Robespierre. Dora, on my aunt's promising that she should see this lady at breakfast, became good.

It was a very odd thing to see the way in which that child, for she was really little more, ruled us. The instant that we were inside the turnstile, she demanded to see the cockatoos and zebras, *why* she could not have told you herself: she simply wanted to have her own way, and she got it. We went at once to the parrot-house, and Dora detained us here for a long time because there was a cockatoo who hung on upside down and swore, a bird which seemed to meet her views entirely.

Poor Dora. She has little coquetry left now; she had some then. She

scarcely spoke to Jack Chetwynd, but put all her questions to Will Dickson ; and we had not been half an hour in those gardens before I saw what I had always wished to see. Will Dickson was in love with my sister. But did she care for Chetwynd, or Dickson, or any one ? At present she chose to take up with the very offensive boy whose head I had painted against her own.

“ I like this Mr. Dickson,” she said, in her odd way, “ and he shall take me to see the zebras. You people can look at the other things.”

As it would not have been of the least use to remonstrate, Dickson and Dora departed alone to see the zebras, and we went the usual round of the Gardens. We had seen nearly everything, and my aunt had said that Noah must have had a fine

time of it, when we noticed a man running very fast from the direction of the great carnivora. My aunt drew our attention to the fact that the lion Nero was the finest lion in Europe, and that he was in the third cage on the right hand side ; we at once went to have a look at Nero, but when we got there the gate was open, and the cage was empty.

“The poor beast is dead,” said my aunt. “They never last many years. I am sorry we have missed him, for he was a fine creature.”

At this moment the head-keeper came up to my aunt, looking very pale but very determined. “Madame,” he said, “remove your party at once. The great lion is loose, and we cannot find him. I have sent round to Albany Street for a firing party of the Second Life Guards, but even

with them the matter looks awkward. The lion ain't a tame one; he killed two Kaffres before he was took; pray, clear, madame."

At this moment little Herbert, a handsome little dwarf, a schoolfellow of ours, came out in a singular manner. "Which is the way to the zebras?" he demanded, emphatically.

The man pointed out the way.

"Charley," he said to me, "follow me," and while the rest of the party were in a state of panic, we went away together.

"Don't you see," he said, "Dora and Will are gone after the zebras, we must go after them and tell them."

I thanked him for his pluck and readiness; and, while I was doing so, I heard a foot on the turf behind me, and, looking round, I saw Miss Lee.

“You had better save yourself, Miss Lee,” I said, “we do not know where the lion is.”

“I am coming with you,” she said; “and as for the lion, there he is before you.”

She was right. We had come sharp round the corner upon him. There was a great circular bed of lobelias, calceolarias, and geraniums, now coming into full blossom. In the centre of the bed, crushing the flowers, lay the lion, with his back towards us, flicking his tail angrily to and fro; on the other side of the flower-bed, facing the lion, were Will Dickson and Dora bending down and looking straight into his eyes. It was inconceivably horrible,—one moment’s indiscretion would be death for one or both.

“Keep your eye on his, Will,” said Dora; “that is the only game now. Don’t lose his eye. Stop, I know something which I read in a book: give me your walking-stick.”

I cried out “Dora! Dora!”

Will Dickson gave her his walking-stick, which was a blackthorn, with the handle at right angles with the stick. Dora held the crook towards the lion, and began to advance.

“You shall not go, my darling,” said Will Dickson; and at that moment I saw the two heads together, just as I had painted them before.

“You may come, too,” she said, smiling, and I saw them come on. Dora held the crook of the stick right towards the lion’s face, and the lion, instead of crouching to spring, sat up, and growled and roared

horribly, trying to get right and left away from Dora, but apparently unable to do so: the brute's whole attention was fixed on Dora, with Will Dickson's walking-stick. At this moment, when I was in an agony of terror, Miss Lee pushed me on one side, and something went flying past my ear. A lariat cast by an old hand fell round the lion's neck, and was tightened with a jerk. Some one cried out, "All hands on here," and the struggling lion was dragged nearly insensible from among the flowers, and hoisted into his den like so much meat.

The young man who had thrown the lasso spoke to me, and asked me who was the young lady who had kept the lion quiet with the walking-stick.

I said that she was my sister.

"You come of a good-plucked family,

sir," he said. "Your sister, sir, has found out that we have no chance with real wild animals, except with the hot iron. Your sister knew that fact, and beat that lion with it; the lion thought that the stick was red hot. I never see such pluck in my days."

"What are you?" I asked.

"I don't exactly know what I am," he said. "I am working with Wombwell now, licking tigers into shape for him. I have been mauled three times, but always by panthers and pumas. Is your sister rich?"

"She is not poor," I said.

"I wish she would come into our trade," said the young man; "she would make two thousand a year. Who was that young gentleman who stuck by her so well?"

“Mr. Dickson.”

“I wish he would come into our profession,” said the young man. “Why, I’d teach he to box a tiger’s ears in a week,—leastwise, if your sister was looking on. They are not going to be married?”

I replied indignantly, “No.”

“Ah, we marry early in our profession,” he said. “I am only twenty-two, and my wife ain’t twenty. She came out as lion-tamer at Valparaiso the week after we were married. Put her head in the lion’s mouth, she did. You gentlefolks are too fine. I don’t see my way to being a gentleman myself.”

Did I see the way to being a gentleman? Would it not be better to let the whole tradition of the family go, and start in the world as *anything*. Only to find what one was worth in the world, and live

up to *that*. Why, this young lion-tamer was a better man than I was.

It seemed to me evident that Dora would take to Will Dickson now, and I laid out the future both for Dora and myself. The worst of it was, that I left out the small fact that Dora had a will of her own.



CHAPTER X.

SHADOWS OF THE FUTURE.

SINGULARLY enough as it seemed to me, Dora treated Dickson no better than before; and as time went on I got very much pained about it. That unhappy picture, painted so long ago, now had done the mischief as I thought, and I was miserable about it for some time, until all at once I missed it from my room.

My sleepy brother Dick missed it from our room, and asked me about it; I said only that it was gone, but I knew that

Dora had taken it, and, as I believed, destroyed it. Not one word ever passed between us on the subject; but the next time I met her I looked at her, and she looked at me and nodded. I felt somewhat relieved that it was gone, and hoped that she would treat Will better now, but such was by no means the case. The extraordinary shifts and dodges to which she resorted to avoid seeing him filled me with amazement. It seemed her leading idea; and at last her anxiety on this point grew so painful to me, that I willingly gave her a promise that I would keep them apart.

“I have never seen your sister for three months,” said Will to me, one day.

“She is so shy,” I answered promptly.

“Is she?” said Will. “It appears, however, that she can talk freely to Pounder

and Lawson. I should say she was not shy."

"Well, old fellow, you can't help a girl's fancies. Perhaps I have praised you somewhat too much to her, and put her against you. But you have never been to our house more than six times in the term. If you came as often as the others you would see her.

Here I did not speak the truth, and Will seemed to have a suspicion of it; but he only said—

"I would sooner you come to me; much rather."

He paused an instant, and then turned on me with his brightest look, and said,—
"Come, Charley, don't let you and I fence with one another. We shall never be true friends if we do. Let us make an absolute compact that we tell all the

truth to one another. For instance, your sister does not like me.

“She does not.”

““Why?””

“Because I painted a picture, more fool I, of you, with your arm round her neck.”

“Well, I should like to care for everything that belongs to you. I wish I could see more of your father, for he is one of the finest fellows I ever met; but I will keep away from your house until this whim of your sister’s is passed over. Meanwhile,” he went on, laughing, “it will be more easy, to me, because the effect that *Son Altesse Royale*, your aunt, with her exasperating placid inanity, has upon me is to make me long to shy the footstool at her. But what would be the good of that; she’d smile on just the same. She is the first lady of rank I have ever seen. Do they all

sit like that, and fit their fellow-creatures for lunatic asylums ? ”

“ That I am sure I don’t know,” I answered ; “ she is the only one of them I ever saw either.”

Any one who has read thus far, will say that the story of my life has been hitherto merely jocular, and as light as air. Think again.

What have you had but this ? A tale of one of the best and kindest of men, left a widower in the heyday of youth, with his hopes in life blighted, and his faith undermined with squalid poverty for his everyday lot, and a family of helpless, untidy children, whom he had no means of educating decently, and whose future was far more dark, uncertain, and unpromising than that of the young brood of the commonest boiler-hammerer in the land.

Next of a highborn woman, sinking without an effort into the habits of those among whom she was thrown, penniless, and hopelessly superstitious, only using her recollections of a higher life to turn the head of a beautiful, passionate, clever, ambitious child. A tale, in short, of decadence and deterioration, settling down darker and darker upon a devoted family. Was there ever a sadder tale told yet?

“And yet,” you urge with truth “you have been using all your powers to make us laugh and giggle through it.” I allow it; the tale would have been too sad to read if I had not. The time is coming when we shall perforce have to leave off laughing, but I propose that we shall laugh as long as possible. This chapter is in reality the saddest as yet, but we will try to laugh on even now, and touch as lightly as

possible. If we begin to get tragical so soon our tragedy would become stale long before we had finished.

The inevitable time came on, as the mid-summer holidays came to a close. Will Dickson's father and mother, kind, gentle, refined people (he was a stockbroker, in a good way of business), had asked me down for a week to the Isle of Wight. And I, having got (I forget by what particular fiction) my paint-box from old Broston, my drawing-master, spent a week in heaven at Alum Bay, bathing and painting. Otherwise, my holidays had been passed in energetic art-work with old Broston, and in equally energetic neglect of my classical studies. At last summer came to an end; new posters appeared from the theatres; and the water in the Holborn Baths grew colder and colder, until the dressing-rooms

began to be lumbered up with boards, and we found it was to be boarded over (water let off first, we hope) and converted into a house of dancing, *videlicet*, a casino.

It was time to go to school, and I went to the old familiar iron gates on the first morning in a state of desperate, defiant carelessness. I had made my election; I had chosen to be an artist, and had announced my choice to my father. Strange as it seemed to me, he had decisively refused my request point blank. I had thought that his own love of art would have made the granting of my request an easy matter to him; but, no. My success on first going to school had turned his head; and though I pointed out to him the cause of it plainly enough—shown him that it was only in consequence of my being put into work I knew by heart,—yet he was inexorable.

His old reverence for University success, which he revered the more from not having attained to it himself, made him angrily obstinate. He said that Dick was a fool; that the only hope of retrieving the family lay in me, and that he would not have his cleverest son turn Arab, and become an artist. I turned on him, and quoted so many random words of his own about the nobleness of art and artists, and reminded him so strongly that he had as good as given his assent before, that he lost his temper. Nothing, he said, stood between me and a bishopric but my own folly. I shall give no more details of the argument. We mutually lost temper, and quarrelled heavily. I left my father in tears, and went off to school with a full determination in my mind.

The old lot were there. Complacent

Pounder, Laughing Lawson, Tom Thumb Herbert, Will Dickson, and Jack Chetwynd, a ferocious, handsome dandy, who appeared in a short coat called a Chesterfield, and a once round tie—a style of dress supposed by the most advanced school bucks to be hitherto confined to officers in the Guards. None of us were surprised when he told us, in an off-hand way, that this was his last term, and that he was going into the 140th Dragoons.

So Will and I went down into the classroom, and took our seats side by side at the monitor's desk for the last time. Mr. Hawkins was absent, of course, with the head master. No man minded his class less; but still no man did more towards driving the head master mad by an ostentatious attention to business. The class was in furious rebellion and disorder.

Three windows were broken in twenty minutes. Valpy's Horaces were flying about in all directions. Dickson and Harvey, the obnoxiously strict monitors, were to be moved, and King Riot should have his own again. Meanwhile, we took down no names; we hadn't the heart to do it.

There were three new boys, and I watched them as curiosities. At first they were dazed by the furious riot, but after a little time I saw that one of them got infected, and desired to join in the Carmagnole; began to feel Berserk; to desire to strip himself naked, like the fourteenth century Shrovetide mummers, of whom Mr. Wright has told us lately. He didn't do that, but he did something equally odd. He looked at the boy next him three times, and the third time he

seized him by the throat, and jobbed him in the ribs with a grammar. Now, seeing that he had never seen this boy before in his life, and that the boy had done nothing whatever to him or any one else, I began to regard this young gentleman with singular interest, as displaying force and decision of character.

Poor old Hawkins. After a very long time the head master managed to get rid of him, and he came rampaging in, as if he had just arrived from the country, with his cap on the back of his head, demanding, as usual, whether Bedlam was broken loose. Interpreting the universal silence as a negative, he read prayers in a rapid and severe tone, with his eye fixed on Lawson, who had begun to giggle at something little Herbert said, and couldn't leave off; in spite of the fear of having

the morning's devotions personally hurled at his head. At last Mr. Hawkins finished, somewhat in this manner we will say, for the sake of decency—" *In secula seculorum* —the boy Lawson will stand in the middle of the room—what boy spoke?—for the remainder of the day, stay in for the rest of the term, and write out, with accents, from the lesser Buttmann, from *ὁ ἦ τὸ δεῖνα* to the word 'uncertain,' go down ten places, and lose his remove. It is better that he should be punished in this world than the next. There are three windows broken. Whole class 100 lines. Six boys to go up. Stand out, Dickson, Harvey, Chetwynd, Herbert," &c.

He was a soft-hearted fellow, this Hawkins. He had the love (and I fear contempt) of every boy who passed under his hands. He made afterwards a noble

parish priest, but he was thrown away as a schoolmaster. Boys demand so inexorably as a master a man they can respect and fear; whereas, you knew where to have this man. We knew how to *manage* him, and that is fatal to the power of any schoolmaster. Boys require a Rhadamanthus. To require a boy to *love* the man whose duty it is to thwart him on all occasions is requiring too much. Respect and fear is all that ninety-nine out of every hundred of schoolmasters have any right to hope for.

If they *can* win a boy's love as well (as Arnold did), let them. I only say this because I had got very fond of old Hawkins, and he nearly turned me from my desperate purposes by a few words he said.

"Boys," he said, "I am very sorry to

lose you. You merely represent to me a batch of young, half-developed souls, just about to pass out of the sphere of my influence (such as it is, we are but weak mortals) for ever. I have been here ten years, and I have got used to losing boys just as I have got fond of them, but I never sent into the Sixth a batch of boys I regretted so much as the present one. I single out two in particular, the monitors. They are the best and most faithful monitors I have ever had; they have restored a degree of order in this class to which, for some utterly inscrutable reason, it has long been a stranger. Of Dickson—I observe that the boy Lawson is affected to tears: he may retire to the desk—*of* Dickson I have nothing to say, save that his conduct should be a tradition in this class, and that a glorious

future appears to be before him. To the boy Harvey I should say, persevere in the course you have so nobly begun. Let me hear of you in the great future that is before you. Your conduct here has been nearly perfect; nay, with the exception of a careless accentuation, and a certain strange imperception of quantity, arising more, I should say, from want of diligence than from want of care, but which strikes me as strange in a boy of your poetic elements, it has been blameless. Persevere, dear boy, persevere. Care in the accents and the habit of learning by heart, say only one ode of Horace a week, will make you safe for a glorious career. Good-bye. The class will begin the 'Επτ' ἐπὶ Θήβας to-morrow. The boy Lawson has his impositions removed, and will go up with the rest. I am not one who

would confound folly with vice; the one may be prayed for, the other must be punished."

I suppose there is no disgrace in saying that I was crying when I left the room; nay, more, that when I got out into the corridor to cross into the lower sixth room I was crying so much, that I waited behind, and let all the others go in before me. All except Jack Chetwynd, who stayed behind with me, and was very kind.

"Come, old fellow," he said, "don't cry at that old fool's speechifying. He didn't mean it, you know, only he wouldn't have his health if he didn't talk that sort of rot. You and I will be well out of this by the end of this half."

"You may be," I said, "but I am doomed to drag on here for I don't know how long."

“Why don’t you show your pluck and get out of it? I would, I know.”

“How?”

“Get expelled.”

I had never dreamt of going so far as that, and I was a little bit frightened. Still, my kind friend and wise adviser had shown a loophole by which I might escape from the drudgery, which seemed only the more hideous as it came nearer. Jack Chetwynd saw that he had sown the seed, and said no more.



CHAPTER XI.

MR. NETHERCLIFT'S DECISION.



MY disasters now fairly began, I will be short over them.

If the drudgery of returning to classical work seemed disgusting in anticipation, it was worse in reality a thousandfold. The *cui bono* of classical drudgery must very often present itself to the minds of those schoolboys who have no chance of being prize winners; it is a wonder so many of them stick to work through a mere blind sense of duty, for the work is, as a fact, thoroughly

disgusting to them ; two-thirds of every class grind steadily on the old mill without hope of kudos, and without dread of disgrace. In a class of sixty the ten best are actuated by ambition, and the ten worst for fear of birch ; the rest, as a general rule, work from a sense of duty, and at work, too, which to them is thoroughly mechanical, not to say disgusting. Tom Brown gives us a beautiful little story of a boy bursting into tears over Helen and Andromache, but he allows that he was the only boy in the class who appreciated what he was reading. A boy of fourteen is incapable of understanding the beauties of those books for the most part, even if they were not made the mechanical means of learning a language which he never had heard, and never could possibly hear *spoken*. A

dead tongue, a tongue without sound, which has to come to his brain through the eye only, and not through the ear, the main portal of intelligence shut to it for ever; the sound of it lost and gone, it would seem, for there seems more difference between the sound of Scotch and French Latin compared with English, than the difference between any form of Latin and Italian. To an English boy, would "The Song of the Bell," or to a German boy, would Milton's "Christmas Hymn," or Longfellow's "Sandalphon," stand the hammering and pounding to which Æschylus and Horace are subjected, without becoming a mere arrangement of words? The system is a good one, no doubt, but could not boys be broken in with inferior books? Couldn't something be done with the *corpus vile* Seneca; or with an author

of astounding stupidity, who wrote in irreproachable Latin ?

This is all written with the feeble purpose of excusing my own obstinacy, I fear. For me, who had tasted the wild delights of Broston's, the drawing-master, and who knew fellows not nineteen, who were making their £100 a year, and giving an account of themselves to no one ; not to the very parents who brought them into the world ; and, I fear in most cases, not to the God who made them, or the Saviour who died for them ; to me, the return to this drudgery, after the glimpse of freedom I had seen, was loathsome to a degree. It was aggravated in many ways, and I began to beat desperately against my prison bars, and grew stronger and stronger in my selfish determination to be free at all risks. At the risk among others, for I knew it, of

amply annoying my father, and leaving him to sink still lower into the mire of careless hopelessness in which he was floundering. May God forgive me.

And Jack Chetwynd, always defiantly idle now, always close to my ear, sneering at the rest of our set, who were making noble efforts; and painting, with all his arts, the glorious wild free world beyond the bars.

At this time the Devil had thorough possession of me. The other day, after everything was over, I came across a portfolio of my drawings which I had done at this time. I have burnt them. I found that the deep, black selfishness of my heart at this time was so truly mirrored in them, that they were horrible to me as I am now. You would not see it, it may be, but I did. I burnt them; but they again

are burnt into my heart. I cannot forget what I once was. May be, it is best that I should not.

And could anything have added to my irritation and disgust more than the change of books. For a boy in this temper to pass suddenly into Juvenal, with his "absolute" slang terms, requiring a continual effort of mechanical memory; and the quaint new exasperating Latin of Terence. I knocked under, and sat sulky at the bottom of the class, a marked boy, with accumulating impositions.

I took to coming late, with lessons unlearnt. I must have appeared to Netherclift—keen-eyed master, true man, I know him, now he is in his grave—what I was, a graceless, sulky young dog.

But in those day schools, masters have little chance, little time for confidence

with their boys. They must take them as they find them. Had Netherclift been able to have more confidence with me, he might have altered matters; as it was, I was left alone with my own heart to God's guidance.

Other guidance I had none: for what could wild boys of my own age do for me. My friends, the boys among whom I had been accidentally thrust, had but one creed, —that of succeeding at school. They were as kind to me as ever; but they had a feeling that I was a disgrace to the old lot. Lawson and Pounder drew away from me. Little Herbert, Will Dickson, and Jack Chetwynd stuck to me through it all.

I had got into terrible trouble one day, an accumulation of imposition, all undone. Netherclift lost his temper about me: I was too bad to be borne. I was the worst

conditioned boy he had ever been thrown against in his whole career. I was moody and defiant, and cared naught for him, or for any man. I should be at Broston's, in Paradise that night. I could work there, with my soul in the work, and every nerve in my body tense with anxiety to succeed. What cared I for a bully like him? Let him do his worst. Jack Chetwynd's advice came to my mind. "Get expelled." I determined to do so.

The room was cleared at one o'clock; but Netherclift said, "Harvey will remain in." A new piece of tyranny; not one short half hour to cool my throbbing head before I came into school, and he began magging and driving at me again. I laid my head down on the desk again, and the Devil, knowing, I suppose, what was to come, was exceeding busy and plausible.

At last there was no one left in the room but Netherclift and myself. He sat still at his desk, and I wondered when the brute was going to lunch; my head throbbed wildly, but my eyes were dry.

He said, "Harvey, come here." I had a good mind to defy him, and sulk; but—well, I did not dare. The old habit of obedience was too strong in me, desperate as I was. I rose and went towards him.

That long face, with large black whiskers falling over his gown; that deadly pale complexion; those big, steady, calm eyes; those white teeth just showing; that settled look of calm expectation; what did these things mean? Meant that he was dying of consumption, but was too proud to show it. No boy knew it, until he went home early one day, and died within

the week. No boy shouted in the corridors *that day*, I warrant you.

I went up to him ; and the Devil, after a few parting instructions, which I promised to follow, went back and sat on my desk, waiting for the issue.

“My dear boy,” said Netherclift, “these are not school hours, and we are only as friend to friend ; will you tell me what *is* the matter, and what I can do to remedy it? You came up here to me, with a character among a thousand boys. Mr. Hawkins—a man who never told a falsehood, though I disapprove of his way of working his class, and you may say so—sends you here as a boy among boys. I know from personal observation that you and Dickson, in a way, reformed the Fifth ; and I know also that you initiated that reformation. I looked forward to having

you in my class. Your name stood highest in the school. I said to myself, this fellow is a fellow of genius and determination. I will drill and utilize this fellow, and bring a higher tone into the class; and I said also that this fellow's works shall live after him. The good work of this boy, whom Hawkins has not succeeded in spoiling, shall remain in my class. He will raise the tone of my class, as Arnold raised the tone of Rugby, though in an inferior degree; and when he has moved up, and gone into the world, his work, as I said before, shall live after him."

I groaned aloud. I had thrown all this to the four winds.

"And now, when this boy, or as I should more correctly say, this young man, comes, what do I find him—morose,

sullen, defiant beyond any boy I ever saw. Idle in the extreme, insolent, and riotous. Now, my dear boy, what is the reason of all this? Do tell me, in the strictest confidence of course, what is the matter?"

He had beat me, and I yielded. I told him everything, from beginning to end, and left him in deep thought.

He was very kind to me that afternoon, and I tried my best, though affairs had got too hopeless.

The next day, on my arrival home, my father begged me to come into his study, and I followed carelessly in.

"My dear Charles," he began, "there has been an estrangement between us for some time; and I humbly confess that I cannot bear it any longer. My life is a burthen to me while it continues. Read this letter."

It was from Netherclift.

“DEAR SIR,—I had a confidential *tête-à-tête* with your son to-day, to see if I could find any clue to his recent extraordinary behaviour.

“After bearing the highest character, he suddenly abandoned himself to a dead, obstinate torpor, from which no punishment seemed able to arouse him. I have very seldom failed to get to a boy’s heart, and his was very easily reached.

“The boy seems to be so utterly devoted, heart and soul, to Art, that I fear very much that we shall do nothing with him in any other way. I have asked a boy, Chetwynd, who attends the same class with him, some questions. He tells me that his talents are of first-rate order, and that it is impossible for your boy to

attend to school-work, as his whole time is absorbed in these Art studies. Under these circumstances I would take him away, and let his wishes have effect. You may say that Art is precarious; but it would not be so precarious as his staying here.

“In conclusion, dear sir, I must tell you this in all Christian candour,—either he must reform, or I shall expel him.”

“Now, Charles, will you reform?”

“I cannot now,” I said; “I have lost all position, and the place is a hell upon earth to me. I am behindhand in everything, and cannot pick up. I have ruined myself *there* for ever.”

“Will you work at Broston’s?”

I don’t know what incoherence I committed. I was on my knees to him in a

moment, begging him to save me from my miserable life. I would work, I said, as man never worked before (and indeed I tried to keep my promise).

“I can struggle no longer,” resumed my father; “have your own way, and let us return to our old relations to one another. God will provide for us somehow. You are an artist henceforward.”

I threw myself into his arms, and sobbed out how wicked, wicked I had been, and so ended our first and last quarrel.



CHAPTER XII.

FREEDOM.

SO my uttermost hopes were fulfilled; I was free, with actually no account of myself to render anywhere. I was as free as any young American, and as ready as any good young American to go flustering up and down the world until I found a master, of my own choosing, which master I would allow to get on my back, and ride me where he would.

I had not found him yet. But in the waking hour at night I found that two

new watchers were at my pillow, Terror and Regret.

Terror and dark dread sat brooding at my bed's head night after night. I had done a nameless and frantic thing. I had deserted all the traditions of respectability as they had been beaten into my head by that poor old mill-horse of a father of mine; had cast myself on the world of chance; had determined to put nothing but my own talents between myself and the workhouse; had given up the comparative certainty of a school and college career for my own wild whim,—that frightened me; but what was more terrible was this, it was purely the result of my own *will*. At times there was something in this reflection which was very terrible. I was utterly unprepared for having all that I wished so suddenly and

so completely, and being launched on the world without a master and without guidance. And poor Haydon, too, the gossip of the studios, how has *he* died? I felt sometimes as though God had said, "Take thine own way, poor fool; take thine own way."

Regret, too, for there she sat night after night upon my bed, while the gas-lamp made weird shadows upon the wall, and Dick lay sleeping peacefully. She said, "Boy, you have defied your father and have won. He never asked you to do but one thing, and you have refused to do that. Do you think that he does not feel it. I was on his bed just now, and he was weeping for you. You say that you love him, why could you not have done as he asked you? He knows now that you care only for yourself and for your own

way ; and so he believes that his love is wasted on you, because you love yourself better than you do him." So Regret said to me, as she sat upon my bed ; and sometimes I would creep in beside Dick, and wake him for sheer company. He would wonder why I cried, and plan expeditions for Sunday to comfort me.

I began now to go very frequently to the Dickson's house, and there I used to meet little Herbert (who never grew any bigger after he was sixteen, and who used to sit up to dinner with us in a high child's chair). We had very pleasant family evenings there for a very long time, for his father and mother were as good as Will Dickson was, which is saying a very great deal.

As time went on he named Dora less and less ; and, for aught I knew, the boy-

fancy had died away. He had left school, and was entered at the Middle Temple, and set reading with a conveyancer before long. I saw more and more of him now, and used, when it was too dark to work, saunter towards his office in Chancery-lane, and walk about with him. Sometimes we had Chetwynd, now a terrible dandy hussar, at the studio; and very often he would go and sit with my father, and have one o'clock dinner with the children, who were immensely fond of him. I asked my aunt once if she thought that he was attached to Dora, and she *now* said that she did not think so, but that it would be an excellent thing if he were, to which opinion of hers I raised the most violent objections, while she laughed, and told me that he had once kissed Miss Lee, and that she had boxed his ears. That is all which I could

get out of my aunt, who, however, promised to cast their nativity, by some process only known to herself. She afterwards informed me that Dora, being born when the sun was in Libra, would marry a tradesman, and I think that she believed it. I asked old Broston what he thought of my aunt's nonsense once, and he got very grave, and said that her ladyship not only was a very clever astrologer, but that she was possessed of the most splendid talisman in the world, and could use it to the highest powers. I wished that she could have brought some money into the house with it, but she never did; and so I left old Broston and her to talk their own balderdash together, and worked away at my art, taking my meals when I could get them, and submitting to all the muddle and confusion at home with, I am glad now

to remember, the most perfect good humour.

I worked a good deal at home, as well as at Broston's, now. My brother Dick, who had tried Oxford with lamentable unsuccess, had got a ticket-clerkship in a railway office, where he gave the profoundest dissatisfaction; but he was a splendid model; for as soon as I got him to dress for me, he would lie by the hour smoking. I painted him as the Prodigal Son, with hardly a rag on him; but he looked so very unrepentant that I altered the title of the picture, and called it, "Maltese Beggar reposing." I asked him if he minded the change in the title, and he said that it was no odds whatever to him. I sold the picture for £35, and got a fresh commission from the man who bought it, old Mr. Chetwynd; but my

father and Broston both stepped in most emphatically, and insisted that I should not fritter away my talents on small matters. I did it, however, unknown to them both; and I think that by the time my father came to me with a razor, which he had bought for a shilling, and begged me to shave off my budding beard, I was secretly earning about £60 or £70 a year, a matter of which no one but myself and my aunt were conscious, for I had been painting in the bedroom of my brother and myself (it was there I had done the "Prodigal Son," or "Maltese Beggar reposing"); and when I heard my father coming, I used to hide my work away before I unlocked the door. I kept little of this money for myself, only enough for clothes and tobacco. All the rest I made was given to my aunt for housekeeping,

and to Dick for other things. Dick had need for money, for he always counted the change wrong when there was any hurry,—sometimes for himself, sometimes against himself. When he counted the change wrong to his own advantage, he was objurgated by the infuriated passenger, and had to make it right with that passenger. When he counted the change wrong to his own disadvantage (which was quite as often) he had (or I might say *I* had) to make it right with the collector at the end of the month. On one occasion an eminent nobleman left a £5 note on the pay-place, in a hurry to catch a train. Dick kept it for five days, until the collector had been round, and then spent it, mostly in buying things for Miss Lee and Dora, considering that £5 note as the reward of unappreciated virtue. The nobleman, however,

returned for his note in about ten days, and, being a man of business, had the number of it; so nothing saved Dick but his coming to me and getting the note replaced. When this inexorable nobleman looked at *my* note, he shook his head at Dick, and told him to take monstrous good care what he was about, or he would come to no good, in which opinion I most entirely concurred with his lordship.

Such is the account of my youth, and that of my friends. I have no more to say of my surroundings until we come to my adolescence.



CHAPTER XIII.

DORA A LADY.



BELIEVE most heartily that faith of some kind or another is absolutely necessary to by far the largest number of passionate and artistic minds. For example, Shelley's sublime Pantheistic faith in the ancient gods has given us his best works. I believe that while he wrote he believed all that he wrote. However, that is not to the point of this story. At this time in my life I deserted all the old formulas of the faith in which I had been brought up, and cast about for a new one. I was.

exceedingly unfortunate in my quest. There are good men at Jerusalem and good men at Jericho ; but, in trying to go from one place to another, I most distinctly fell among thieves : I got in among the Mesmerists half-way, to my aunt's most intense delight. When I look back now, I am utterly at a loss to think how I could have been such an outrageous fool, but I was. I simply believed everything which was told me about spiritual manifestations, without evidence on which one would hang a mouse. I am sorry to say so much about myself ; but I cannot explain this story without mentioning this circumstance. On my word, I wonder when I think of the extreme violence of some of my friends (most excellent people) on the occasion of my declaring that Spiritualism was a humbug from beginning to end, and that

I could not swear to ever having seen anything supernatural in my life, — on remembering their violence, I say I am utterly puzzled at their folly now I know how entirely idiotic it was and is. However, I was very young at this time, and in consequence of leaving respectable traditions and taking up with the nonsense of Broston and my aunt, I got, not into scepticism (for we wallowed in a slough of the most ridiculous superstition), but into a state of mind lower than that represented by the belief in Romish miracles. This gave my aunt a new and great power over me. Enough of this at present ; we will speak of more natural and more pleasant themes, and as little of this one. What is unpleasant for me to write down must, I argue, be unpleasant to read, however interesting or even alarming.

Dora and I are together in my studio, and Dora is in one of her very best moods. We are sitting together, I painting, she sitting at my elbow and making believe to sew. I am painting Dick as usual (he was three pounds wrong in his change last week, and so is submissive), I am painting him as a Red Indian in council with the Great Father (President of the United States). We have had great trouble with the eagle's feathers in his hair, but Miss Lee managed it at last; she understands his hair. We have unanimously elected my father (artistic) President, because he looks amiable and intelligent. Miss Lee and Dora are to be squaws in attendance on my brother Dick, while my Aunt Edith is to be the lady of the White House, and present Dora and Miss Lee with wampum. Miss Lee says that she can buy wampum

in Wardour Street, and I ask her what it is : she has not the least idea, but says that it is perfectly easy to ask for it ; in fact, we are quite merry and comfortable, when in comes my father, with the newly-arrived *Record* under his arm.

“ What *is* wampum, father ? ”

“ I have not the wildest idea,” said my father ; “ but what Dick has got round his neck most certainly is not.”

“ Lor’, no,” I said, “ that is a cavalry headstall, covered with cowrie shells, of the 140th, which I borrowed from Chetwynd, because it came up to my idea of wampum.”

“ If you don’t pay more attention to your accessories, my lad, you will have the *Saturday Review* down on you. Is my eldest son to be bridled like an ass before he can be painted as a Red Indian ? Dick,

old man, don't let him paint you as a Red Indian, you are far too good-looking."

"I don't mind what *he* does," grunted Dick. "He is too good a brother for me to mind anything."

My father was greatly delighted. "Let us, at all events, with a Red Indian in the family, smoke the calumet. Charles, have you any cigars?"

I laughed at my father, and nodded to Dora, who fetched a box from a corner.

"You rascal," said my father to me, as Dora brought him a light for one and kissed him, "you have been selling another picture."

I only laughed in return, while my father smoked his cigar, and opened the *Record*.

"Hum! ha!" he began. "Clerical appointments and vacancies. There's a

vacancy here for a curate if any one would find me the money to pay for one. Jackson to the Deanery of Crediton ; I knew him so well, a splendid man, he deserves better than that ; but he has trusted the Tories throughout, and now they are in they have their hands so full that they can, I suppose, do nothing more. Hullo ! here's old Georgy Trumbull got a living at last ; six hundred a year ; he will marry Old Martha now, I suppose ; that is fine. Cobby Jones, Minor Canonry at Salisbury. Bravo Cobby ! I am as glad as if I had got it myself. Long Norton to Broughton-cum-Scopton ; what a shame ! why that man is worth ten of me, and has been working in the Black Country these fourteen years. I refused that living five-and-twenty years ago ; I suppose the poor old fellow has gone there to die in his native moors."

To me there was something very beautiful in hearing my father read out without one grain of envy, but with absolute pleasure, the various promotions of his old acquaintances. He never thought of himself. I looked at Dora, and her eyes were like sparks ; *she* knew what I meant.

“Dr. Blather,” went on my father, “to the living of Ballybrogue, County Tipperary, on the presentation of the Duke of Tipperary ; Protestant population, 40 ; net income, £1,500. There will be a row about these Irish livings some day, but not in our time. Hallo ! Charley, here is something for you. Listen to this. The Reverend James Hawkins, late Master at the North-West London Grammar School, to the Rectory of Frogmarsh, in Essex. Dora, get me the Clergy List.”

So it was, and the living was worth a

thousand a year. Hawkins had so ingratiated himself with the patron of that living, of which he had been active curate, that while he was leaving all us young lunatics to howl about the corridors, he had laid the foundations of his own fortunes. I confess that my father was for a moment annoyed at this, and said, "If I had neglected my duty to my pupils as he did, I should have been a beggar. This is a little too much." But he was all right again in a minute, and said that Hawkins was a good fellow when all was said and done, and that he had no doubt that Hawkins would make an admirable parish priest, which thing Hawkins did, as I have mentioned before.

But before we had done wondering at this wonderful good luck of Hawkins there came a letter to me from the man himself,

with a seal in which was a coronet over a lozenge, and a bear's head above. The coronet and the lozenge puzzled me very much, but the letter explained it.

“DEAR HARVEY,—You have doubtless heard that I have married the Dowager Lady Frogmarsh, aunt of my present patron, and that I am about to undertake the duties of my new cure of souls.”

This was the first I had heard of the Dowager Dady Frogmarsh, but I understood his management of his class better than ever.

“It is my desire to take leave of all my favourite old pupils, and so I have borrowed the house and grounds of my nephew, Frogmarsh, at Putney, to give a *fête*, at which I hope you will attend, as I watch

your *steadily growing reputation* with deep interest.

“ J. S. HAWKINS.

“ P.S.—My wife, Lady Hawkins Frogmarsh, will call on your aunt, Lady Edith, at once.”

My aunt made great fun about the lozenge and the coronet, opining that Lady Frogmarsh must be mad. The title of Hawkins Frogmarsh seemed uncommonly wild also ; but we discovered afterwards that it was only an invention of Hawkins's own, as were the lozenge and coronet, which he had done on his own responsibility, and which were at once called in by Lady Frogmarsh, who kept her own name without the affix of Hawkins.

This lady called on my aunt in a very few days in great state, to the profound

admiration of our square, which had never seen anything in any way approaching to her ladyship's carriage and footmen. My aunt, Dora, and I were in the room when she came, and I watched Dora, who watched every motion she made. I saw also for myself that Lady Frogmarsh glanced at my aunt with a look of eager and intense curiosity for one instant only, and then round the mean room which had been my aunt's *entourage* for so many years now. She could not help saying, in spite of all her good breeding, "My dear Lady Edith, how long *have* you been living here?"

"Too many happy years to remember in a moment, Lady Frogmarsh. All my darlings have been growing up round me so fast, that I have forgotten time. How old are you, Dora?"

“Seventeen,” said Dora, coming forward into the light quietly.

Lady Frogmarsh gave a start of surprise, and said abruptly, “My dear, do you know how beautiful you are?”

“No, Lady Frogmarsh,” said Dora, quietly; “I leave that for other people to find out,” but she blushed, too, I thought; and a conversation began between my aunt and Lady Frogmarsh, the like of which I had never heard before, though I have often heard it since. It was all about great people, and it pleased my aunt mightily, I thought, while it seemed to be meat and drink to Lady Frogmarsh. No interruption took place in it until the entrance of Miss Lee, who, poor girl, had made herself as tidy as she could to see the real live countess, but her success had not been equal to her deserts: the poor

young lady was always romping with the children, and could not keep tidy. She was painfully conscious of it now, as I saw in her face as she looked at me, and I was very sorry for her. She only opened the door, and stood in the darkness, but my aunt stopped Lady Frogmarsh in an account of the marriage of Lady Alice Meredith, the beauty of the day, by saying, in a low voice, "I want you to see this ;" and then louder, "Miss Lee, come here."

Poor Miss Lee. I do not think I ever saw any one look more beautiful than she did at this moment. Ill-fitting and shabby as her clothes were, they could not hide the extraordinary grace and majesty of the shape within them. (Miss Lee's clothes were beautiful in my eyes, and I could sooner have painted her in them than

in silks and diamonds, for did she not keep her sister at school?) She came towards Lady Frogmarsh blushing, and looking so lovely, that the good-natured woman exclaimed, "Good heavens! who is this young lady?"

"This is the governess," said my aunt, looking proudly on her.

"Have you any more imprisoned beauties in this wonderful castle of yours, you enchantress?" said Lady Frogmarsh to my aunt. "You have been at your old incantations, I fear, Lady Edith, and have discovered a spell for making all young people beautiful. Confess."

"I know no spell, except constant inculcation of good humour."

"Well, you have certainly got some spell for keeping people young," said Lady Frogmarsh, laughing; "for you are

as handsome as you were twenty years ago, when we were pretty nearly equal in that respect, and look at me now. Now Dora, my dear, go upstairs, put on your bonnet, and come for a drive with me in the Park."

Dora was beginning, "I am afraid, Lady Frogmarsh——" when my aunt said "Come upstairs with me, Dora," and Dora went quite quietly.

"You are the rising young artist, sir, are you not?" said Lady Frogmarsh to me.

I bowed.

"Will you take a commission from me to paint my husband's portrait? I want to give him one on his birthday, and I know that it will please his kind heart to know that it was painted by one of his old pupils."

I bowed and blushed, and began to conceive a very great liking for this simple unaffected woman. After a little, while she was talking kindly to Miss Lee, Dora came back.

Surely my aunt *must* be an enchantress. I did not know Dora; she had left the room a quietly-dressed young lady, and she came back a splendidly-dressed young woman; that bonnet was my aunt's, those yellow gloves must have come from my aunt's drawer, and that inimitable lace shawl which fell over Dora's figure was certainly my aunt's, for she had often told us that there was scarcely another like it in England, and that if the worst came to the worst, she could sell it, and keep us three months on it. I cast an uneasy glance towards Dora's feet (for boot and shoes were a difficult item in our family), and

Dora meeting my eye, just advanced her tiny little foot, and showed me a beautiful bronze boot ; in fact, Dora, from top to toe, was a very fine lady indeed.

“Now, sir,” said Lady Frogmarsh, “are you ready ?”

I was utterly taken aback. I murmured something about my singular dress, but she answered, laughing, “Dress, indeed, you dandy artist, don’t be affected ; with that velvet coat, that scarlet tie, not to mention that very nice-looking, budding beard and moustache of yours, you will be taken for a foreigner of distinction ; get your hat and come at once, sir.” In fact, in my way, like most young artists, I turned out a tremendous dandy every Sunday, and, of course, had on my finest clothes to-day. I ran upstairs to get my best hat, and my only pair of gloves, which were brand new,

and of the best quality, and when I came downstairs again I was, in my way, as fine as Dora.

“Now,” said Lady Frogmarsh, in conclusion, “you are all to come to my party, you young people, and we will make you as happy as we can. We will have a good long afternoon, and if it is wet we will dance in the house. Next Tuesday, at three, mind, Edith. I will make you dance with my bridegroom ; now, come away, you two.”

I never exactly saw any one more astonished than the footman was when he saw two such figures as Dora and myself come from such a wretched house as ours, the very shabbiest in a rather shabby square. However, Dora got into the carriage as if she had been drawn in one all her life, and I followed her example, taking the position I had seen men take in the park, and lean-

ing forward when I spoke to Lady Frogmarsh or Dora, and so away we went on our journey, through a city we knew well, but which was an enchanted city now.

“Do you like driving in a carriage, my dear?” said her ladyship.

“I never was in one before,” said Dora, simply; “I think it delightful.”

“How very nice,” said Lady Frogmarsh. “Do you like ices, my love?”

“I never tasted any,” said Dora.

“Tell him to drive to Berkeley Square,” Lady Frogmarsh said to me; and to Gunter’s we went, and had ices sitting in the carriage under the trees opposite.

“Now we will go into the Park, and see the fine folks,” said our patroness, “and we are quite as fine as any of them. I am quite proud of my two young friends. You have a wonderfully good air, Dora; it is a

good thing to live with women like your aunt. John," to the footman, "pay for these ices, and get a pint jar of turtle soup; and when the carriage goes round to the mews, James," to the coachman, "take it to the wife of that helper that broke his leg, and tell her that he is to have a tea-cupful every two hours."

The coachman touched his hat, as if he perfectly understood her ladyship, and I began to notice about the lady's whole establishment an amount of comfortable gracefulness which I had never seen before. The footman, coachman, carriage and horses, were all extremely handsome and elegant; we drove faster than anybody else. When I came on old Hawkins in the Park soon afterwards, he was riding beside an archbishop famed for his excellent cobs, but Hwakins's cob was the best, and

Hawkins himself looked as if he had only to take to knee-shorts, gaiters, and an apron to be a bishop himself. As it was, he looked like a very superior kind of arch-deacon. Lady Frogmarsh was exceedingly proud of him, as she waved her hand to him and bowed to the archbishop. Hawkins rode up to the carriage, and, nodding at me, said to his wife, "This is exactly like you, trying to make young people happy. Harvey, you will know Lady Frogmarsh better soon," and then he looked at Dora, and at his wife, for he was not much in society get, and thought that Dora must be some very fine lady indeed, for Dora sat under her aunt's best pink parasol as if she had been used to this sort of thing all her life.

"This," said Lady Frogmarsh, "is Mr. Harvey's sister." Hawkins was so utterly

taken aback (for, as I have said before, I was a shabby boy at school), that he fell back on so much of fashionable tittle-tattle as he knew, which was not much, and, raising his hat, asked her if this was her first season.

“I am not out yet,” she quietly replied, reefing her (aunt’s) parasol. “I am still in the schoolroom. I am coming to Lady Frogmarsh’s garden party certainly, but I am coming in charge of my governess, Miss Lee.”

The puzzled Hawkins raised his hat and retreated to his archbishop, while we drove slowly on.

“Should I do in the fine world, Lady Frogmarsh?” asked Dora.

“Most admirably, my dear, of course you would, with your bringing up with your aunt, the negro—— I mean, that

your aunt is one of the most perfectly formed women in the world, and she has formed you. See, here is the Queen : you raise your hat, you, sir ; it is old-fashioned manners, but it is good manners.”

I was looking at the near side outrider, and thinking how he would paint for Antinous, when I saw the Queen looking steadily at Dora. We all made our reverences as she went slowly past, which were returned ; then the Queen turned again, still looking straight at Dora, evidently with great interest, and I saw Dora flush up ; then the carriage was stopped in the crush, and I became aware that a horse’s head was against my leg, and, looking up, I saw a resplendent dandy, who was no other than Jack Chetwynd, who, it seemed, knew Lady Frogmarsh, as everybody knows every one else in general society. He took

off his hat to her, and spoke to me, without showing the least surprise.

“Well, Charley, my dear, how are the governor and Lady Edith? Miss Harvey, I beg a thousand pardons; I only saw your brother in the crush; I did not see that it was you at all. Are you going to Lady Polacre’s to-night?”

“No,” said Dora, laughing naturally and heartily; “I am not asked, and not likely to be, as you well know. Who is Lady Polacre? Are you coming to dinner with the children to-morrow at one? There is cold scrag-end of mutton, I believe.”

Jack made the appointment, and rode away, looking rather sheepish. Lady Frogmarsh applauded Dora most highly—“My dear,” she said, “never be a snob. You set down that young snob most

admirably, by behaving like a lady, and being simple and truthful. Mind, you must not talk cold scrag-end of mutton to every one ; you can simply say that you are poor. But in his case you were right : the cold mutton choked the vulgar young fellow."

"Is he vulgar, Lady Frogmarsh ?"

"Insufferably so. I wonder that he has got on so long in such a regiment as the 140th ; no one likes him ; but he is a splendid young officer, there is no doubt about *that*. I am only speaking socially, you know,—and—and—all confirm the fact. He dances better than almost anyone, and talks well ; but he comes of *roturier* blood, and it crops out. He is a prig, and talks about great families as if he knew them personally. Look at what he said to you just now about your going

to Lady Polacre's. He knew that you were about as likely to go there as you were to Jerusalem."

A pause.

"Can you dance, Dora?"

"Yes, I can dance very well, I think. I have danced very much at Mr. Petly's academy with the other girls who came there, and I often dance with my brothers."

"Does she dance well, sir?" said Lady Frogmarsh to me.

"She dances like a fairy," said I; and, indeed, like most young artists—then, at all events—I was a pretty good judge, because, although I was an innocent youngster, I had danced a good deal at places where I had much better not have been.

"You *shall* go to Lady Polacre's," said the resolute lady. "James, stop for Mr.

Harvey to get out. Good-bye, sir. Tell Lady Edith that I have taken Dora on to Lady Polacre's ball, do you hear?" And after I was out I heard her say, "Drive to Jane Clark's, in Regent Street, as fast as you can." And so I saw Dora whirled away ten miles an hour, and I was left by the Serpentine alone among the dandies, feeling like a gold-fish whose globe has been upset, and who is struggling for life on the floor.

My dress, for that period odd, and my slight beard, at that time unique, attracted some attention, which I did not like at first, until I heard one man say to another, in a low voice, "That is the brother of that beautiful girl that Lady Frogmarsh is going to bring out. Her family is as poor as Job, but as old as Methusaleh; that young fellow is a rising artist. Chet-

wynd, of the 140th, told me all about it."

I strolled over to the Row and looked about me, with the vague idea that something was wrong, and that Dora and I were humbugs—daws in other birds' feathers; but I got over all this when I saw Jack Chetwynd's hand held up to me from among a party of horsemen, and when we had had a little talk together at the rails,—

"How splendid Dora looked," he whispered. "I knew how it would be the instant she chose to show herself. But why in the name of confusion did not Lady Edith let her come out before?"

"Jack, you know our circumstances."

"Fudge!" he replied. "If your dear aunt was not an obstinate lunatic, her family would be glad to have her back, and

she might have brought out Dora instead of leaving it to Lady Frogmarsh."

"Who *is* Lady Frogmarsh?" I asked.

"She is a very jolly soul, a widow of the late Frogmarsh, aunt of the present one. Her husband settled every penny he could on her, some nine thousand a year, and she has married old Hawkins, who deserves her fortune, for he never interfered with *me*. She has got her nephew to give Hawkins one of the family livings, which makes their income nearly up to ten."

"What is she like?"

"Well, she is thirty-nine years of age, and her principal aim in life is to make every one comfortable about her; has the doctor in for the groom's chilblains, and treats every one well. Hawkins has fallen on his feet, and young Frogmarsh is

perfectly submissive. I daresay that she wants to catch Dora for him."

"Dora has a will of her own," I said.

"Well, I know that as well as you do. But, I say, old fellow, come and have some dinner at the Club, before I go to dress for Lady Polacre's."

I agreed, laughing at the thought of the young person he was going to meet there. I went and dined with him, and I drank a great deal of wine to clear my brains, for I was rather in a daze. After he had gone to dress, I sauntered home, by no means drunk (I never was that in my life), but with all my sense of right and wrong topsy-turvy. On going into my father's room, I found him hammering away at his sermon, the subject of which was the apparent cruelty of the old Jewish wars—a pretty subject for a

Philistine congregation like ours. When he asked me how I was, I said that I was half-tipsy, I believed, but that he most emphatically denied. He gave up his sermon, and we went up to my studio, where we were joined by my Aunt Edith and Miss Lee. My father and I smoked, while I related the wonderful events of the day, ending by telling them the fact of Dora's having been taken away to Lady Polacre's ball, and my having dined at a club, and taken quite as much wine as was good for me. It was necessary to sit up for Dora ; and so Miss Lee and Aunt Mary dozed, while my father and I fell into argument. He began on his sermon, and I told him that it was indiscreet. My father argued that it was not, and told me that he was going further every Sunday on the same line. I hinted to him about theological pains and

penalties attaching to some remarks about the fall of Jericho; but he was perfectly obdurate, and he expressed some opinions so entirely at variance with those of the Church of England, that I foresaw plainly that if they were expressed in public, he must leave the old communion. I told him so, and he allowed his entire willingness. His present life, he said, was too hard to be borne any longer.

And, lo! Dora all of a sudden, at three in the morning, brought in by my aunt, in a splendid ball-dress, with flowers in her hair and flowers in her hand, who said to him, "Kiss me, dear father; I have been so happy;—kiss me, and love me, dearest. If they make me fine, I will be fine with the best of them; but my home is always with you and Charley and Aunt Edith."



CHAPTER XIV.

MY AUNT EDITH SURPRISES US.

DORA and Miss Lee asked me at breakfast next morning whether they could come into my studio for an hour. My father and Aunt Edith said that they would come also, at which Dora and Miss Lee exchanged glances. When they were all in I began diligently setting up my palette, which I knew would put them at their ease.

“It is perfectly obvious,” said my aunt, beginning, “that Dora cannot go in my clothes, for I want them myself. *I* am going, and I have a particular reason *for*

going. The clothes which Lady Frogmarsh gave her yesterday are of no earthly use as morning clothes, and she must have others."

My father groaned. There was a time when he would have been horrified at his daughter's receiving clothes from a mere stranger, but that time was far gone by; he only groaned.

"It was perfectly correct for Dora to accept them," continued my aunt. "The thing is done in the world every day. If Dora does no worse than accept a ball-dress and an introduction from a steady-going woman like Lady Frogmarsh, she won't come to much harm. If she chooses to take up Dora, knowing how poor we are, she is bound to find her clothes, and so you need not groan, brother. This state of things must end.

Dora and Charles must go into society, now that the door is open, and make all our fortunes."

"You know the world better than I do, sister," said my father, humbly; "but I have not got any money, and shall soon have less."

"I suppose," said my aunt, quietly, as if there was nothing the matter, "that they will not suspend you under a year. You can't last over that time, you know. Then you will be free, and we shall have nothing at all to live on. I did not want to come on the public if I could help it, and shall have to go abroad. Meanwhile, the question is as to Dora's clothes. I will provide those clothes. I have a good store of money in hand, though I wanted to keep it for a rainy day. We must draw on that."

“My dear,” said my father, “I thought you were so poor.”

“Every farthing of my own money, brother,” she added, “has been put most honestly into the housekeeping; my earnings I have saved.”

“Your earnings!” cried my father, aghast.

“Yes. I go my own way to work. I love nothing better than a secret. I will draw out of my little wages’ fund money enough for Dora’s dress and Miss Lee’s dress.”

“Why for me, dear madam?” said Miss Lee, humbly.

“Because you are more beautiful even than Dora, and because you could dress yourself perfectly well on your salary if you did not spend it all on your sister’s schooling, now that your mother is dead.

You must go, and go fine. I want you married, my girl, and married well."

Here my aunt, looking at Miss Lee, relapsed into a stony silence, from which she emerged by saying, "You fool."

"Dick must go, of course," she said, "and his clothes will cost about ten pounds or so. I make out that this affair, including the hire of the carriage, will cost me about five-and-thirty pounds, first and last, but if we *are* going it's as well to go fine. I must work a little harder, that is all. Now, come away, all of you, and leave Charles and his father to themselves."

When they were gone my father and I looked at one another in blank amazement.

"Do *you* know what this means, father?" said I.

“I was going to ask *you* that,” he replied. “You go into the world more than I do.”

“I know nothing at all,” I replied.

“Nor I,” said he. “I have been always under the impression that she was the idlest person in the family.”

“Yet she is out a good part of the day, too,” I said.

“How on earth can she earn money?” said my father.

“Do you think that she is one of those mesmerists?” I asked.

My father seemed to think it very probable; but the matter remained quite in obscurity till the day of the great party.



CHAPTER XV.

THE GARDEN PARTY.



AM not at all likely to forget our first party ; in fact, at the present day, the smell of a freshly-watered garden, blazing with flowers, causes me incontinently to think of Miss Lee in cream-coloured kid gloves, most beautifully dressed, walking sleepily beside my very sleepy brother Dick, down by the river. The crowd was very great even when we got there, but it soon grew larger, until there was scarcely room for

us to move about, and then I began to hear the conversation.

“Lady Frogmarsh is a mistress of surprises,” said one.

“Which is the girl she has adopted, Miss Lee or Miss Harvey?” said another.

“Miss Harvey, I believe,” said the other, “but Miss Lee is the handsomer of the two by far.”

“By far,” said the other. “Who is this wonderful Miss Lee?”

“Some say that she is Miss Harvey’s governess.”

“She is not dressed much like a governess; why, she is one of the best dressed women here.”

“Chetwynd says that Lady Edith Harvey has dressed her in order to spite her niece.”

“Lady Edith Harvey,” said the other.
“Which woman is she?”

“The woman with the long lace shawl,
standing beside Lady Lothbury.”

“*That*,” said the first man; “that is
Mrs. Horton, the singing mistress.”

“I beg your pardon,” said the first
man; “she was introduced to me by
Lady Frogmarsh as Lady Edith Harvey.”

“Well,” said the other man, “I ought
to know my own sister’s singing mistress.
I’ll tell you what I will do to prove myself
right, I’ll take you up to her and in-
troduce her to you as Mrs. Horton.”

I followed the two men very closely.
The first man went coolly up to my aunt,
and said :—

“Mrs. Horton, may I introduce you
to Mr. Dickenson?”

“I should like to know him very well,”

said my aunt, quietly, looking at him. "I like young people. Are you fond of music?"

"Yes, madam," said the puzzled young man.

"You have a singing face," said my aunt. "I thought you were. How is your sister, my pupil, Mr. Hatterleigh?"

"She is very well, Mrs. Horton."

"You had better call me Lady Edith Harvey here," she said; "Mrs. Horton is only my *nomme de guerre*." And so she departed, leaving me in dumb amazement standing on the grass.

I took occasion to stumble slightly against the young man, and beg his pardon. As he smiled very agreeably, and looked very nice; I remarked that the grounds were rather full.

"Very," he said, rather obviously,

wondering who I was, for, as I mentioned before, my dress was not exactly like other people's, but slightly more florid. "I think," he continued, "that you foreigners must laugh at our English way of enjoying ourselves."

I astonished him by saying that I was born and bred in London, and had never been out of it further than Reading.

"That is very strange, now. I have only been in it since I joined the 140th."

"There is an officer there called Chetwynd," I remarked.

"Oh, yes. By the bye, I have seen you with him, have I not?"

I assented.

"Ah! he will make a fine officer. He is, according to his small powers, a martinet already. Pray, what is the mystery

of Lady Edith Harvey being Mrs. Horton, and *vice versâ* ? ”

Hatterleigh looked so frank and honest that I said :—“ Lady Edith is the best of women, but she is rather eccentric. She is a widow, and has for many years preferred living with a very poor brother-in-law to seeing or knowing anything of her family. Up to this very day she has kept her own secret so well that none of us knew that she gave music lessons ; at home she never touches the piano at all, and she has left the musical education of my sister almost entirely to the man who tunes the piano.”

“ Your sister ! ”

“ My sister, Miss Harvey, who is her niece.”

“ Then the beautiful Miss Harvey is your sister. Shall I tell you some-

thing unfavourable of her?" he said, laughing.

He was so frank that I laughed in his face.

"Your sister has no high musical talent."

"Why," said I, astonished, "that is exactly what my aunt is always telling her."

"I knew it," he said, triumphantly. "She will not instruct any but the very highest talent. Arditi sent her to my cousin Kate, Sir George Hatterleigh's daughter, and she might have taught at her own price; but, after the second or third lesson, she quietly informed my aunt, Lady Hatterleigh, that she was a very charming girl, but that no one would ever teach her to sing. Kate was delighted, for she hates it, but my aunt was

very angry. *Your* aunt declined to argue, and marched out of the house, declining to receive the money for the two ‘wasted’ (that was *your* aunt’s expression) lessons.”

I was immensely eager to hear more.

“Have you ever heard her sing?”

He shook his head.

“No,” he said, “never. She never allows any one near the room when she is teaching.”

“But Miss Hatterleigh,” I said. “She must have heard her?”

“Only in passages,” said he; “and, although your aunt is very kind and gentle, I have known her keep my sister so long over one note or one passage, that the poor girl has cried to me about it, and I have made her presents and taken her for little treats to encourage her to continue.”

At this moment I felt a hand on my shoulder, and, turning round, I saw Dora.

“I want you, dear,” she said, “to come round and help find the old boys. My heart warms towards them very much; please come.”

Hatterleigh’s eyes asked so plainly for an introduction, that I at once gave him one, and he came with us, making himself most agreeable.

One by one we came on them all, and got them to follow us, little Herbert in the centre of us; Chetwynd walked next to Dora, and paid her great attention, which she seemed to take as a matter of course; and as we went along Dora gave Will Dickson her gloves and handkerchief to hold, while she gathered a small bouquet of flowers. After this we went up to Hawkins in a body,

with Dora at our head, and she, making a low courtesy, presented them to him with a very few words :—

“Presented to Mr. Hawkins by five of his naughtiest old pupils, who promise never to do so any more.”

The old fellow was greatly affected, and looked at us as paternally as if he had been our most careful and conscientious instructor, instead of having sown in more than one of us the seeds of idleness and license just when we wanted discipline and guidance. However, we loved him none the worse, and he most certainly loved us the better.

There was dancing, and Dora danced with every one who asked her quite indiscriminately. She most certainly showed Jack Chetwynd no particular favour, but as we were going away I had to look for

her. I found her with him in the conservatory, and I heard her say to him :—

“I shall not be at home to you, John, either to-morrow or the next day. If you have these ridiculous fits of jealousy and anger, go your own way in the world and I will go mine.”

Whereby I concluded that matters had gone further than I knew of, and that Dora had made her choice in life before she had seen it.



CHAPTER XVI.

HAWKINS MAKES A MAN OF ME.

MY aunt, almost, if not quite, without forethought, had broken the spell of all our previous lives, and there was a change in my father's house which emancipated some of us, but which only left him in deeper gloom than ever.

Dora did not return home with us on the night of the party; she slept at Lady Frogmarsh's. The four who returned to my father were my aunt, my brother Dick, Miss Lee, and myself. My father and the two pupils were waiting for us,

and as one of those stupid young men was attached to me, and afterwards did me good service when I wanted a friend sorely, I will mention his name — Henderson. They had only stayed up to admire Miss Lee, and when Miss Lee was asked by my aunt to come upstairs with us into my studio, those young gentlemen went up to smoke and read novels in their bedroom.

When we were all seated, my aunt began :—

“ Brother, have I ever said an unkind word in this house ? ”

Here Miss Lee burst into a tempest of tears, and my father, looking scared, went and kissed my aunt.

“ Never,” he said ; “ why ask such an idle, foolish question ? You have been the quiet, good genius of the house ever since you have come into it.”

“I have tried to be kind, and to make you love me. I might have done more to keep the house in order, perhaps, but I am as God made me, a sleepy, dreamy creature, and I have dreamed my time away here, not unhappily. When I am gone——”

My father bowed his head.

“When I am gone you will think of me kindly; you will know that I love you still when I am far away.”

And here she paused, as if distrusting her own calmness; if a shell had burst in the house I could not have been more utterly astonished.

“Are you going to leave me, after so many years?” said my father, raising his head.

“Yes,” she said, “it is necessary for the good of us all, and more especially for your

own good. You of all others must rouse yourself now, and face the world once more by yourself. You must not stand in your children's light, brother."

"That is very true," said my father, humbly. "First, however, let me ask where you are going, and if you are going for ever?"

"I am not going for ever, by any means; and as you ask me where I am going, I say that I am going to Italy, on an errand which will bring us in a great deal of money, my dear, which you shall share, you may depend on it."

"What is the errand?" asked my father, who had some dim suspicions, as he told me afterwards, that it had something to do with my aunt's favourite craze of "ghostmongery," a word which he had invented for himself, and applied, not only

to the great jewel itself, but to such common and accepted facts as talking tables and witches' broomsticks, in all of which my aunt most devoutly believed. Indeed, if my aunt had told him that she was going to fly to Italy on a broomstick, giving Lady Frogmarsh a seat behind, my father would not have been greatly surprised, for she had often talked nearly as great nonsense by the yard.

"Never mind the errand, brother," said my aunt, smiling; "it has nothing whatever to do with the Lorko Sandarga; it is a good errand, and a money-making errand, and an errand which is in every way sanctioned by"—here she was going to talk nonsense, but stopped, and said—"by Providence. I am going to Italy, and I suspect some one else is going also."

"Dora?" asked my father.

“Dora!” said my aunt, bridling and seizing her point with marvellous dexterity. “Don’t be ridiculous, brother. Why on earth should I lug Dora to Italy just as she has got the ball to her foot in England? To think that I should stand in the girl’s way like that now that Lady Frogmarsh has insisted on her spending the rest of the season with them, and wants to present her at Court. Unless I am mistaken, the day Dora marries she will have her five to ten thousand pounds. Why, they want to adopt her, but I said you would never stand that. Ha! ha! and to take Dora to Italy.”

My father acquiesced in dead silence.

“*I think,*” said my aunt, “that Charles here, with his vast talents, ought most certainly to have some study at Rome; just as I began to think so, there comes an

offer to me from a gentleman, a great admirer of his, to pay his expenses there for a year; could anything have happened more fortunately? I was going to ask Charles to see me and the young lady who goes with me across the Alps. *I* could have paid for that, but he would have had to return at once without any study; now he is to have a year in Rome."

I gasped with utter amazement and delight. Rome! and for me! I turned to my father to see him share my delight, but he had his head buried in his hands. I put my arm round his neck, and he turned up his face to mine; he had been crying; whereupon Miss Lee began too.

"I am only crying, my boy," he said, "because this good fortune comes to us so suddenly. You will write to your old, lonely father, will you not?"

“You shall be at Rome as much as I am,” I said. “Every post you shall see Rome through my spectacles. We shall not be separated at all; and if I don’t *work*——” I could not put the emphasis on the word “work” sufficiently hard.

“Are you going to take Miss Lee away?” asked my father, with a feeble smile.

At this point Miss Lee made very nearly a scene, and broke out into a rambling speech, with more tears. “*She* was never going to leave the kindest and dearest friend she had ever had in the world. Others might leave him, and she believed that it would be best in the end, though her old master and she would find it very lonely in winter, but she would never leave him; this house was her only home, and if her old master turned her into the

street in the snow, she would die on the doorstep. She knew she had faults, she said ; she was untidy ; she talked to the servants and to the policeman, and was late for church ; but she would try to do better. She did not want to be a fine lady, and go to parties ; half the people at the party yesterday were guys, and she would sooner live among Christian children than such people. The children at home, she said, were almost always tidy now, and she meant that they should be tidier. In short, Miss Lee delivered herself of a manifesto the result of which was that she declined on any terms whatever to leave my father.

“Why, you silly child,” said my aunt, quietly, when she had done, “part of the plan is that you should stay here and take care of Mr. Harvey and the children.

Don't cry ; you are a good girl, and when Charley and I fit matters right, you shall live with us till you marry a duke, that is for ever, unless you go of your own choice."

At this moment my brother Dick, who had taken no visible notice of the proceedings, said :—

"Then I ain't in all this ?"

"What do you mean ?" said my aunt.

"Nothing coming my way," said Dick, looking handsomer than ever, and smiling ; "not such a thing as an easy post under Government, or a small trifle of that kind, eh ?"

"Why, Dick," said my aunt, thoughtfully, "I had forgotten all about you, my dear."

"So I thought," said Dick.

"You are a difficult customer, you

know, Dick," said my aunt. "You stay here, and be steady, and help Miss Lee to be kind to your father until better times turn up."

"It's all one to me," said Dick. "So long as I can earn enough to eat, and drink, and sleep comfortably, I'm content."

"And you will be steady, Dick?" said my aunt.

For an instant there came a flash of intelligence and brightness on Dick's face which I had never seen there before; but he had his old sleepy look on again as he answered:—

"I'll be steady enough; you may trust me about that. I was only eighteenpence wrong in my change last month, too; so that is an improvement."

"Now," said my aunt, "all go to bed,

and we will sleep over this. Charley, stay here."

As soon as they were gone, I attacked my aunt. "Aunt," I said, "can you really stand this fearful extra expense of keeping me at Rome for a year?"

"I stand it, child? of course, I can't."

"Then there is really some one else?" I asked.

"Of course there is; don't you see that it is old Hawkins?"

"Hawkins!"

"Why, who else could it be? He came to me yesterday and asked me about your talents. I, of course, rated them very high. He opened his mind to me, as most folks do when they know me, and he said that he was often troubled in his mind about having neglected his pupils, and that he would try to make amends now in some

way ; were you poor ? I left him in no doubt on *that* point. Would it do you any good to study a year in Rome ? I left him in no doubt about that either, and mentioned that I was going to Milan with a young lady myself. Would you accept of the money necessary for a student ? I replied, that you were neither foolish nor wicked. So the thing was done, and you had better get your things ready. I wanted to leave Dora all the jewels, but I shall want them to wear myself, for sham jewels won't go go down on the Italian—I mean in Italian society. The Lorko Sandarga, of course, goes ; but my will is made, and it comes to you. I have been consulting it, but can get nothing from it."

"That bodes ill for our expedition, aunt," I said.

"Don't know, my dear," she said. "I

have been using my brains pretty sharply these last ten days, since that Frogmarsh woman came and roused me up, and the spirits of the air hate that. H'm! h'm! that girl will be the making of him yet."

"What girl?"

"Miss Lee."

"Be the making of——?" I suggested.

"Your brother Dick," said my aunt.

"He is lazy and he is a fool; but he loves that girl with a love worth having, and she loves him as well as he loves her. Good night."



CHAPTER XVII.

AT LADY FROGMARSH'S.



MY father was very low next morning, but acquiesced in everything, most entirely employing himself in giving a few finishing touches to the sermon, and to hearing Henderson and his comrade hammer away at their Virgil. My aunt was away all day, and I began at once to get my things together, but in a secret manner, so as not to attract my father's attention. After a time I put on my best clothes, and stepped round to Broston's to announce my good fortune,

to tell them all that I had a rich patron, who was going to send me to Rome for a year. I remember feeling an instinct that every young man in the room hated me, and that I rather liked it. I did not call on Mr. Hawkins that day ; but as I was determined to thank him by word of mouth, I did not write to him, but waited three or four days. On the last of these, when I came home I found Dora alone with her father, sitting upon his knee, and doing his hair ; she was very handsomely dressed, and looked very happy. What she had been saying to him I do not know ; but Dora had a way of saying what she *had* been saying in a way which puzzled third parties, who had heard, not only what she had said first, but what she said she had been saying afterwards. She was not at all untruthful ; but the second edition

of her speeches, as given to the world, were something like those of early century orators, who spoke before the art of stenography was developed; they had emendations and annotations which were not in the original. We wickedly suspect that any man who had the luck to hear Demosthenes deliver “*de Corona*” first, and then had the pleasure of reading it afterwards, when it was written down, must have opened his eyes pretty wide: so I saw a slight raising of my father’s eyebrows as Dora went on:—

“I have been telling papa,” she said, “how fortunate it is that I am left here to see him every day, now that aunt and you are going so far from him. I shall come every day while we are in town, and write every day when we go to Scarborough. (This matter of Scarborough was obviously

new to my father). I have been telling him that it is much better that we should part for a time in preparation for a happier meeting; and that I will marry no man who does not engage to give him a good living. That is all true, is it not, papa?"

My father said, in the most resigned way, "Yes," almost comically. And we talked about these startling new affairs until I heard a carriage drive up to the door, and looking out, I said, "Here is Lady Frogmarsh's carriage come for you, Dora; you had better be going."

"Not at all," said Dora.

"But you will keep the servants waiting," I urged.

"The very thing I want to get them used to," replied Dora. "Let them wait; I'll make them wait before I have done with them."

“But you may keep Lady Frogmarsh waiting,” I said.

“Let *her* wait,” said Dora. “I am going to have my own way in *that* house, and the sooner they understand it the better. If Lady Frogmarsh does not like it, she can send me home again.”

In fact, Dora deliberately kept the carriage waiting; and then asked me to drive with her. My father was in a state of such intense amusement that he showed it in his face, and catching Dora's eye, burst out laughing; she joined, and then I took her down-stairs.

“Where is Lady Frogmarsh?” asked Dora, of the footman.

“Her ladyship is waiting at Mrs. Clark's, in Regent Street, miss, for you,” replied the young man.

“Then just drive round by Brook

Street, will you, No. 107, the milliner's?" said Dora. And to Brook Street we went, as fast as two of the best horses in London could take us. Dora got out, and went in for a few minutes, though I most firmly believe that she did not want anything. I sat in the carriage; and when she came out she paused on the pavement, gathering her dress together preparatory to getting in, and said to the footman.

"*Where* did you say Lady Frogmarsh was?"

"At Mrs. Clark's, miss, waiting," said the man, touching his hat.

"H'm!" said Dora, pensively. "Well, you can drive there now; I don't think I have anything else to do."

"You little humbug and actress," I said, laughing; "Lady Frogmarsh won't stand this long."

“Let her sit it then,” said Dora; “I am not going to play second in any house *I* enter. But *you* don’t know, for men know nothing.”

On arriving at Regent Street, we found Lady Frogmarsh comfortably seated in the shop, and patiently abiding Dora’s time.

“Why, my dear,” she said, “I began to think that you were run away from me, carriage and footman and coachman and all.”

“I drove round by Brook Street, Lady Frogmarsh,” said Dora.

“Well, go upstairs, and see after those things; and your brother will give me his arm as far as the fur shop,” which I did.

As soon as we were out of ear-shot, Lady Frogmarsh began laughing.

“How delightful she is!” said Lady Frogmarsh.

I was exceedingly relieved to hear that; but I expressed my relief in a moderated form.

“Delightful,” she continued; “she has not been twenty-four hours in the house, but she has the servants perfectly well in hand. My own maid took up her warm water this morning; and she complained that it was not warm enough, and made her go down and get some more; after which she said that she hoped it would not happen again. *I* dared not have done it. As for Mr. Hawkins, he is as proud of her as if she were his own daughter.”

“I hope you will not spoil her,” said I.

“You will never do *that*,” she answered.

“I mean, I hope you will not over-pet her.”

“Who could help doing that? Pretty Sweet. You may rest assured that I will pet her as much as I can. And your sister is right about the servants, her position is not clear in their eyes; and if she shows a bold front to them at once, she will have no trouble at all with them. If she does not show a bold front to them,” continued this good woman, laughing, “she may ring her bell as often as I do, without getting it answered. Why, this very morning, before we came out driving, I rang three times for my maid; and at last I was told that she was upstairs, dressing Miss Harvey.”

I did not know which to admire most, Dora's consummate coolness, or the profound glee with which Lady Frogmarsh told the story.

“Besides, you know,” she went on,

“servants, like my maid Ancott, like it in reality. Ancott is a first-rate lady’s maid, and she can’t have much pleasure in dressing an old body like me. With a woman like me, it does not so much matter how my clothes are put on, so long as they are fine enough, and in good taste—Mrs. Clark looks after the taste, as her bills show. Whereas, in the case of a really splendid beauty like Dora, Ancott has an opportunity of showing her art; and you, as an artist yourself, must sympathize with her. We are going to Lady Dumbledore’s to-night, and I shall be dressed by the still-room maid, if she is not busy about something else. Mr. Hawkins has been out to buy her bouquet himself.”

“Speaking of Mr. Hawkins,” I said, “do you think that he is at home now?”

“Certainly,” said Lady Frogmarsh.

“Do you think that I might go home with you now; and, and——”

“*To* be sure,” said Lady Frogmarsh.

“Why, he will be as glad of it as if you had given him a hundred pounds. Come with us. How nice it was of you to think about it. As for the portrait, you know that order must stand over. It will be all the better, eh, like old wine?”

Dora was graciously pleased to have been kept waiting by Lady Frogmarsh when we got back to the carriage, and Lady Frogmarsh apologized by saying that I had been so agreeable that she had not seen how time had flown. Dora was graciously pleased to accept her apologies, and made herself very agreeable as we drove to Putney.

Lady Frogmarsh told a footman to take me up to his master's study, and I followed the young man, but when I got near the door I gave that young man half a crown, and said that I would announce myself. This met his views completely; but I could not help thinking that he considered me extremely green in the matter of the half-crown. It would have been a long time before he had got one out of Dora.

I opened the door. There sat my old master, reading "Pickwick" in the mulioned window of a luxurious library, smelling of Russia leather; exactly the kind of library into which an unfortunate Tractarian or Broad Church curate is shown when it has become necessary for him to be admonished by his bishop for

his soul's health and comfort. There sat old Hawkins, as like a bishop as he could make himself.

"I announced myself, sir," I said, for strangely the old schoolboy awe was upon me.

"*What, sir?*" said Hawkins, fiercely, in exactly the old way, as he caught sight of me.

"I announced myself, sir," I said, feebly.

"Don't resort to a falsehood, sir," he cried. "You did nothing of the kind. A falsehood will not serve your turn, sir."

I saw his cue. I said, "I meant, sir——"

"Don't prevaricate, sir. Now, that is the boy Harvey," he said, in his old, curious way, when he had caught a boy

at mischief. "I was certain that it was the boy Harvey from the first. That boy will come to no good end, sir."

"Mr. Hawkins, I want to make some effort to thank——"

"The boy Harvey will stay in to the end of term, and write out the first book of Euclid."

"But, sir, you must let me——"

"If you say another word on the subject, sir, I shall write to your father."

This, the most terrible of all old school threats, set me laughing, although I was very near crying. I advanced towards him, and, taking the hand which had so often boxed my ears with Valpy's Greek Testament (his favourite weapon, which he always kept ready) I kissed that heavy old hand fervently.

“ Good boy, good boy,” he said. “ Noisy enough. You were the noisiest boy I ever had, except poor Tommy Hexter, who was killed at Sobraon. Sit down. Ah ! you remember those old times ; what fun it was. The time you threw Will Dickson’s ‘ Euripides ’ through the window, aiming at little Herbert. Do you remember that ? ”

“ It was not found out, sir.”

“ Why, I was sitting in my private room and saw the book come flying through the window ; and I heard Will Dickson say, ‘ Now you have done it, Charles Harvey,’ and I couldn’t come in for laughing for a few minutes, and then I set the whole class a hundred lines, until the boy who had done it was given up.”

“ But no one told, sir ? ”

“ No ! no ! Good boys, honest boys,

all of them ; fine fellows. Not one would say a word, and next day you came to me and gave yourself up."

"And you let me off all my impositions in consequence," said I.

"Did I? Well, I daresay you soon had just as many again, so it came to the same thing in the end. Ha! ha! by the bye, that sister of Will Dickson's is a very nice girl, indeed."

I thought so also.

"Not like your sister, you know, nothing so superior as that, oh, no. But very like her brother; nice, modest, retiring girl. We had her here, but she was frightened, and did not like it. As for your sister, she is not a bit frightened, and *does* like it. She rules the roast here, bless her sweet face; our pleasure is to

lie down and let her walk over us. As for Lady Frogmarsh, she reminds me of a hen who has hatched one egg late in life, and that a swan's egg. The swan will go into the water, and Lady Frogmarsh must wet her feet after her. Ha! ha! But we will take good care of her."

I thanked him, and he grew serious.

"Do you see anything of Chetwynd now?" he asked, suddenly.

I said "Yes."

"You understand me when I say that a certain thing must not be?"

"I quite understand you, sir."

"We have views with regard to your sister, and our views are these:—We wish her to see a little of the world and of life before she chooses. We are far too old to dream of any family of our own, and

long before we came together we talked about adopting a daughter. My wife was for a boy, but I said most emphatically that I had been plagued with boys for too many years ever to tolerate the sight of another, and she, yielding to my superior experience (I think I gave *you* as a case in point) agreed that it would never do to have a boy (like you, you know) about the house, so we determined on a daughter. We tried Mary Dickson, but she hated it, and did not even come to our party. Well, I suspect that you know more about that than I do. All of a sudden, by the merest accident, my wife falls across this sister of yours. I saw that the thing was done the moment I set eyes on my wife's face. I like the arrangement quite as much as she does. She

shall see for herself and choose for herself; and where she chooses we will agree to anything in reason. But that young man Chetwynd, will *not* do, Harvey. He is a snob and a prig to the marrow of his bones, and he is cruel, as his men know, and as you know. But she likes him, sir, and unless she sees some one she likes better she will marry him."

I could only bow my head.

"There's Will Dickson," he continued, "if she chos eto set her heart on him. I would sooner she had him than a duke. However, we must wait and hope for the best. This is not business, though I must give you the cheque for my portrait."

"But it is not painted, sir," I said.

"I am the gainer by that," he said, "because you will paint better when you

come from Rome than you do now, and I only give you the price I should have given you before. When do you go?"

"I join my aunt at Antwerp in a fortnight, so I will not say good-bye."

"No! no! Well, here is the cheque." And when I got away and opened the envelope I found that it was for seventy pounds.

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